Germany's Isolation

Paul Rohrbach

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GERMANY'S ISOLATION

Germany's Isolation

An Exposition of the Economic Causes of the War

By

PAUL ROHRBACH

Professor of Colonial Economy in the Commercial Academy of Berlin

Translated from the German

By

PAUL H. PHILLIPSON, PH.D.

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures of the University of Chicago

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

FOR some time after August 4, 1914, the writing of war literature was the fashion of the day. Perfectly respectable men and women, who in the ordinary walks of life would not harm the proverbial fly, suddenly plunged their unsuspecting pens shamelessly into the hearts of innocent inkwells and covered miles of snowy paper with sable wreck and ruin. Thundering polemics defending the cause of one or more belligerents and imploring perdition upon the opponent were hurled against suffering humanity. Peaceful citizens in public or private gatherings seemed to have forgotten their time-honored greetings of the day, and, instead, heaped such insults as "Militarism," "Neutrality," "Kultur," and "Allies" upon each other. A huge conspiracy between authors, publishers, linotypes, and binderies was unearthed. America fairly reeled with all this horror.

Now that peace has been restored — at least on this side of the Atlantic — an examination into the *status quo* reveals the curious fact that almost all ammunition employed, from the smallest to the largest caliber, had been canned in American factories. I am excepting, of course,

such floating mines as Bernhardi, Treitschke, and Nietzsche, which had torn loose from their anchorings years and even decades ago, and are now fished up, overhauled, and again put to belligerous use, strangely enough by the enemy. But the countries at war have contributed least of all to the vast stores of literary ordnance.

In presenting Paul Rohrbach's book to the English-speaking public, it has not been my desire to disturb the tranquillity of re-assured peace. On the contrary, I have been actuated by the purer motive of permitting a voice from across the sea, a voice of reason, to outring the hues and cries of passionate partisanship. I do not wish to be misunderstood. Rohrbach's book is distinctly partisan in the sense that no expression of thought, engendered, as it were, in the very midst of the most tragic event that history has yet recorded, can or should be free from partisanship. But it is the partisanship of reason, to which, of the innumerable host of spiritual defendants, America has ever granted the fairest trial.

A word or two regarding Dr. Rohrbach. He was born in 1869 in Livland and obtained his training in the higher schools of Mitau and at the universities of Dorpat, Berlin, and Strassburg. His academic education completed, he undertook extensive travels in Asia and Africa. From 1903 to 1906 he occupied the position of

imperial commissioner in Southwest Africa. Since then he has been professor of colonial economy in the Commercial Academy of Berlin. Numerous publications, of which the present little volume is one of the most recent, attest his enormous store of first-hand information and practical knowledge of his subject, and in all of them is a note of truth and conviction which cannot fail alike to impress friend and foe. He is a fearless critic of the people no less than of the government, and the most brilliant exponent of a greater colonial Germany. Rohrbach's mind translated into American ways of thinking and doing would render the author one of our foremost fellow citizens and patriots.

The German title of the present volume is *Der Krieg und die deutsche Politik,* which translated into English reads, *The War and the German Foreign Policy.* Whatever may have been the object of the author (or publisher?) in choosing that title, certain it is that it does not adequately express the contents of the book. I have, therefore, availed myself of a privilege which is sanctioned by precedent when I substitute for the title of Rohrbach's choice the more pertinent one of *Germany's Isolation; an Exposition of the Economic Causes of the War.*

PAUL H. PHILLIPSON.

The University of Chicago,
March, 1915.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE present work was started several months previous to the Serajevo murder, and completed when the first battles on the soil of Lorraine and Belgium had been fought. In the first five chapters, therefore, the danger of war is presumed as existing in the future — though not in the remote future; in the sixth chapter the outbreak of the conflict, as the result of the Servian crime, is considered imminent; the seventh chapter treats of the war. For a time I was undecided whether or not it would be advisable, after the outbreak of the struggle, to continue and conclude the work. After mature deliberation and counsel with my publisher, I finally decided in the affirmative and resolved, at the same time, to print the chapters which had been written before the war *in their original form.* In that way I hope to be able all the more readily to point out that the crisis which had come to a sudden and violent issue was entirely in the line of the necessary development of affairs.

The war has been forced upon us, and yet we must look upon it as a stroke of good fortune that the sacrificial death of Archduke Francis

Ferdinand led to the *premature outbreak* of the great anti-German conspiracy. Two years later the war would have been far more difficult, its victims more numerous, and its outcome less certain. Today, however, it is safe to assert, in view of the results achieved at the beginning and in the more advanced stages of the war, that the victory over all our enemies, join them who may, *is less a question of military than of moral significance.* The trust in our success is fitly illustrated by an episode in biblical history. We read in the book of Isaiah about the plot of the king of Damascus and Samaria against the house of David in Jerusalem. King Ahaz, so the story runs, was told of the alliance of his two powerful opponents, and his heart and the heart of his people were moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. Then the prophet went forth to meet him and said unto him, "Fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands; ask thee a sign of the Lord!" But Ahaz feared and said, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." And Isaiah said, "Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel (that is, God is with us)." Danger will indeed pass so fast that the young mother who conceives the child in time of grief,

will call it by the name of triumph, "The Lord is with us."

This story teaches a wonderful lesson. We may face the most severe test of strength that fate has ever imposed upon us, with the same confidence which gleams forth from the words of the prophet. The thousands of young women who at the beginning of the war had been united in wedlock with the husbands of their choice, may choose as confidently as the mother of Immanuel a name of triumph for their offspring which will be born in the fateful hour of this titanic struggle. They may do so in the firm conviction that we cannot be conquered if our moral strength holds out. If, on the other hand, we succumb to the power of our united opponents, our fall will not have been caused by the weakness and inability of our armed forces, but by the lack of moral endurance in the face of the great trial.

We do not enter into this war as we did into the war of 1870, with the recent experiences of two victorious campaigns. At the opening of the struggle we had no leaders whom the nation at home and in the field could regard in advance with the same confidence which the preceding generation, when called to arms against France, reposed in their generals. Even in point of diplomatic preparation this war differs from the one which resulted in the unification of the

German Empire. These facts make it all the more obvious that we did not want the war, but that it was handed us as a present so that we might experience the inner unification, the great rise of our national spirit, and be at last in the position to fight for our rightful place among the great powers of the world. Nothing would have been more dangerous and more calamitous for our country than that the outbreak of the war be delayed another two years, the enemies meanwhile redoubling their strength to strike at us all the harder. For a brief moment or two, when new enemies arose and our allies denied us their assistance, it seemed as if a shadow of apprehension were cast over our country. But when our army demonstrated that it could successfully resist every enemy, the cloud of anxiety passed as fast as it had appeared. As to the triumphs gained in battles, in the west no less than in the east, we may, in the spirit of unwavering confidence, even now call our sons of 1915, "Children of Victory."

But the greatest task we are facing is the duty of self-sacrifice incumbent upon our more fortunate fellow citizens. Unlike our opponents, we have the substantial internal advantage of striking from necessity, without choice and without the possibility of parrying the thrust which is aimed at our life. Our opponents, however, are striking from political principles, considerations,

and impulses of various kinds. For this reason every one of them is more or less firmly bound to the war and to the war-pact. The war broke out in midsummer, and not, as desired by the enemy, at a time when our provisions would have shortly been consumed. Fortunately, our crops had this year been as plentiful as seldom before, and the national larder was well stocked with meat and other provisions. With regard to our general armament, such as artillery equipment, arms, and uniforms, we had lately gained considerable advantages over the Russians and French. Equally fortunate was the fact that just in summer our naval troops had completed their training. And yet fate decreed that our opponents be unexpectedly forced to act. Unlike the Russians, we are able, without foreign assistance, to manufacture, within our own borders, all necessary material for direct or indirect military use. One and only one serious difficulty arises in the face of assured victory. Can the national food supply, which is available within the boundaries of the empire, be made accessible to all those who are in special need of it for their maintenance and health?

England joined our two enemies, France and Russia, with the supposition that by cutting off our supplies and starving us economically the war would all the faster be decided to our disadvantage, after which England's commerce

would have undisputed sway throughout the world. With regard to food supplies proper, such action would just this year fall short of its purpose. Not so, if our industry be deprived of the necessary raw material. We have some reserve stock, perhaps more than the enemy thinks; yet within a conceivable space of time there is bound to be a shortage. We do not produce any cotton and silk, and only a fraction of our requisite supply of wool and other animal products, of most metals, of timber, oils, etc. As a result, our factories will soon have to shut down, not only on account of the withdrawal of employees able to bear arms, but also for lack of raw material. More than half of our imports consists of industrial raw material and almost two-thirds of our exports of finished products. The English, who are fully aware of these facts, will scarcely hesitate, if hard pressed, to declare all raw material which may be imported into Germany by way of neutral countries contraband of war. If there is no other way, they will be ready to reimburse the Americans, whom they cannot disregard, for the cotton withheld from shipment to Germany.

How will the account look on the other side? The largest and most important item which we should find there is the firm resolution by public and private contributions to support the hungry and needy, those that did not go into the field,

men unable to bear arms, women, and children, until the attack of the enemy is broken down and we are in the position to conclude a peace which will heal the wounds of war and make it possible for us to maintain our rank as a world power. Germany and Austria together have a population which, in round figures, amounts to one hundred and twenty millions. These two countries are now engaged in a life and death struggle. They have a sufficient supply of food and implements of war. Even if the leadership and success of our armies were of average quality, it is obvious, beyond doubt, that, as far as the human mind is able to foretell, we cannot be crushed with such overwhelming odds that the terms of peace will be dictated by our enemies. If nothing else, the internal affairs of France and Russia renders this assurance doubly sure. Neither one of these two nations is characterized by a degree of strength and a public spirit of solidarity great enough to produce in their citizens the willingness to sacrifice their last possessions in behalf of the cause. Even if Italy should decide to join the ranks of our opponents, we have no longer any cause for alarm.

If no disturbances in nature interfere with the logical course of events, there is nothing that could force Germany into a premature peace but the starvation of the breadless, an emergency which will be brought about only by the refusal

of the rich to share their plenty with the needy. It is not impossible that a state income tax of an extremely high rate will be imposed or raised by voluntary contributions, not for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the war, but to buy bread and meat, German-grown products, for those that are unable to provide for themselves because they have been deprived of the opportunity to earn a living by the labor of their hands. It is impossible to starve out Germany, as she depends neither for her food supply nor for her implements of war upon foreign markets. What more is there to be said regarding the outcome of a struggle which is waged for the safety of empire and nation and not for provinces, forts, and boundaries?

The question of victory is therefore for us a question of national and moral strength and of willingness by the wealthier classes who have still to spare when the income of the humbler classes is increasingly reduced and in the end ceases altogether, to support that part of the population which depends for a livelihood on the proceeds of labor and not on the income of property. It matters little whether the required funds are raised by private organizations or are levied by state taxation; in either case, the assistance of the government bureaus will be demanded. Germany will lose this war only if the rich, the wealthy, and all those that are assured of a

definite income from investments or steady occupation will say, "Henceforth the support of the unemployed, in other words, the maintenance of our country, is too great a sacrifice; henceforth we prefer an ignominious peace, (a peace which will exclude Germany from the ranks of world powers), to the continuous drain on our own property by contributions to the sustenance of the destitute."

The test of the moral courage of our leading classes is the only real test which we shall have to face. To doubt the military efficiency of our army is entirely superfluous. If we stand the moral test, victory is assured; then, and only then, we have truly earned it. If we fail in that test, we are not worthy of victory, and neither we nor the world at large has any reason to bewail our ruin. The public-spirited generosity which has so far been exhibited by private individuals and corporate societies is a very creditable beginning. But we must remember that it is, indeed, only the beginning. No one of us will underestimate the amount of guilt and wrongdoing which has begun to accumulate in our moral life even among us in Germany. Let us remember, above all, the stigma of the decreasing birth-rate, the dread of raising children. Let us hope that this war will so discipline our nation that all the great and good of which the German mind is capable will flourish again as of old.

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GERMANY'S ISOLATION

CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF ENGLAND'S WORLD POWER

THE present-day political interrelation of the leading powers and nations dates back to the gigantic struggles of the eighteenth century. However, the rise of Prussia, as well as the Hapsburg-Spanish and the French national policies, in so far as Europe and the continent have been affected by them, fall well within the limits of our own historical consciousness. A detailed discussion of them is, therefore, unnecessary. This, on the other hand, is not the case with the quarrel of a hundred years' standing between France and England. Its progress and eventual issue are of importance, above all other matters, because of their determining influence on the political development of the past century. Nor can it be said that our fellow citizens versed in the art of statesmanship recognize these inner connections as clearly as a thorough understanding of contemporary history seems to demand.

During the eighteenth century, Europe's relation to the colonial world across the sea gained

a growing significance for the European states, a significance even greater than during the age of discoveries. On the one hand, actual colonization assumed greater proportions; on the other, colonial products were of ever-increasing importance in international economy. These facts, though incomparable to present-time conditions, were forming the very foundations for them. On the face of it, England seemed the only, or almost only, power ruling beyond the sea, and the English the great colonizers par excellence. But about the middle of the eighteenth century, the rivalry between the French colonial policy and that of England was far from being settled. In India, the two countries were equal in strength, while in America, the spacial preponderance of the Neo-Latin races over the Anglo-Saxons was considerable. By far the greater portion of the western continents belonged to the Spaniards, Portuguese, and French. On the North American continent, Mexico, at that time double its present size, and Florida were Spanish possessions; west of the Mississippi, an immense French territory, Louisiana — the Land of Louis XIV — extended into the unexplored north.

True, the French were unable to settle and colonize the land, but they had and held the claim to it. The very names of settlements, such as New Orleans at the mouth of the Mississippi, St. Louis at the confluence of the Mississippi and

the Missouri, as well as many other names, as far as the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and extending well into the Canada of today, tell the tale of French exploitative ambition in the territory between the Gulf of Mexico and the great Canadian lakes. Moreover, France owned the vast territory extending from the mouth of the St. Lawrence along the river basin, thence west and south into the interior to the borders of Louisiana, in the hinterland of the Alleghanies. Thus, not only South America but almost all of the North American continent belonged to the Neo-Latin nations. If in 1750 a prognosis regarding the future of America had been ventured, its terms could have scarcely differed from the following: Ibero-Latin-French-Catholic.

Events took a different turn. They took a different turn primarily for the reason that France, in the Seven Years' War, attempted to attain the impossible, viz., to make war on Prussia in Europe, and on England in the colonies and on the ocean. Possibly, a more efficient system of taxation might have enabled France to back up her efforts on the continent and, at the same time, satisfy the demands of her naval and colonial wars. The French people were rich, but the government lacked funds. Yet, under the pressure of existing conditions, the double-war was bound to end disastrously for France. Nothing was gained in Europe, and, beyond the sea,

England was victorious. After the Seven Years' War, France lost out in India, while Canada, at that time the cream of the French colonial possessions, came under English rule; similarly, the territory of Louisiana east of the Mississippi. The balance became Spanish, until later, under Napoleon, it was made for the second time a French domain.

Such were the events that decided the future of North America in favor of the Anglo-Saxon world. Another question remained unanswered, the question whether England or France was to obtain the determining influence on the final status of the non-European countries. Although the English navy, as early as the eighteenth century, had the ascendency over the French, that ascendency was not assured; on the contrary, the French navy held its own on the open seas, and, under favorable conditions, had no reason to fear an engagement with its English rival. During the American war of independence, the French men-of-war were fully able to protect the transport to America of French auxiliary troops. Everything depended upon the final status of the French naval strength as it would shape itself in the midst of the unquestionable rise of the French national consciousness during the great revolution. The efficiency of the French nation revealed itself in all its strength only after the abolishment of the worthless system of state

taxes. Unfortunately, the navy did not profit by the total change of affairs, as, contrary to the army, it had remained an institution loyal to the sovereign. The republican dictators, looking upon the royalistic naval officers and crews as a danger to the continuance of the republic, deprived the navy of the essential support. They went even beyond that by allowing it to deteriorate, to degenerate. In less than a decade the ancient power of France on the high seas was ruined. When Napoleon seized the reins of authority, he recognized, no doubt, the necessity of a powerful navy, without which France would be unable to bring the war with England to a favorable conclusion. Yet all his endeavors in that direction proved futile; France lacked the state of peace indispensable to the restoration of the demoralized naval institution.

Thus it came about that the unadjustable divergence of interests of Napoleonic France on the one side and of England on the other was decided in England's favor. Napoleon's inheritance, forced upon him by the French revolution, consisted in the program of the so-called "natural boundaries" of France. The English, however, considered a France which would comprise the greater portion of the continental North-Sea coast intolerable; for it could be plainly foreseen that the possessions of the Netherlands and Belgium, countries of great riches, industrial effi-

ciency, and seafaring traditions, would render France, with her own industry and foreign trade, a dangerous competitor, one that would soon outstrip England's naval power.

It was Napoleon's conscious endeavor to create a French world policy exceeding by far the European limitations, a transoceanic policy in the real sense of the word. Owing to England's supremacy on the seas, the American domains which were still in France's possession could not be safely reached or even held. In lieu of them, Egypt was to be the corner-stone of a new France beyond the water. It is false to historical interpretation to look upon Napoleon's expedition to Egypt as a mere adventure without an adequate military and political foundation. Its success, however, was entirely dependent upon the possibility and method of continued communication with the mother country. The Egyptian project was bound to fail when the English in the battle of Abukir Bay, in 1798, destroyed the French fleet which had conveyed the army of occupation to Egypt.

The fate of the expedition to Egypt, though exhibiting the naval weakness of France in the most glaring light, could not act as a deterrent from renewed attempts on the other side of the water. The needs of France pointed imperatively to that course. The naval treaty with England, 1801, was followed immediately by a reorganization of the colonial possessions which had suffered greatly by

the war. . . . But Napoleon's mind reached out beyond the mere restoration of the pre-revolutionary state of affairs; he increased the French colonial possessions by (re-) gaining the land of the Mississippi basin, and cast his eye on Florida and on many another province of his weak Spanish neighbor. Thus he planned to found a great New France in Central America and the southern North America, with Louisiana and San Domingo as her principal states. The old Bourbonic kingdom had endeavored to dispute the claims of the Anglo-Saxons to the North-American continent, with the north as a point of departure — the young revolutionary power made haste to renew these efforts from the south and west.*

If Napoleon's plans in America had succeeded, the future of the continent as an Anglo-Saxon-Protestant country over against a Neo-Latin-Catholic empire under French rule would again have been called in question. Napoleon resumed the project of Louis XIV. Spain and all of the Spanish possessions in America were to become a territory of expansion, subservient to French interests, in this case, under the rule of a Napoleonic branch line. North America, between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean, as a French-Spanish possession, would have been a successful check to Anglo-Saxon development in its western course. That project, like all the previous ones, could be carried out only if France were able to maintain her sea communication in the face of England's naval strength. But, when in 1805

* Roloff, *History of European Colonization.*

England issued victoriously from the naval battle at Trafalgar against the forcibly united French and Spanish fleets, all hopes for success had to be abandoned.

The battle of Trafalgar marks the turning point in the hundred-year struggle between England and France for the supremacy in transoceanic expansion. As a matter of fact, the battle of Trafalgar was potentially lost when the French navy was destroyed by the policy of the revolutionists. In spite of supreme efforts, it proved impossible, while at war with the far superior English, to raise the navy to its former level of efficiency. Napoleon was active, to the degree of severity, in bringing about its restoration; yet, the mere building of ships and equipping them with inadequately trained crews, fell necessarily short of the purpose, since the haphazardly raised fighting power lacked that mark of intrinsic proficiency in which the English were far in the lead.

Even after the reverses of Trafalgar, Napoleon did not consider his transoceanic and general world policy as lost. When the English blocked his way across the ocean, he returned to the Orient as his field of operation, and here his European victories seemed to open up new possibilities. That policy is plainly revealed after the removal, at Austerlitz, of the Austro-Russian resistance, and, at Jena, of the Prussian.

Having in the treaty of Tilsit (1807) made peace with Russia and entered into an alliance with the Russians, he intended to divide the Turkish empire among the three empires, France, Russia, and Austria. Egypt as well as extensive littorals of Syria and Asia Minor were to become French possessions; besides, he planned with the help of Russia and Austria to attack India, on land by way of Persia, from the sea with Isle de France (Mauritius), at that time still a French possession, as a base. In connection with the scheme which was to make France the first power in the Near-East and the sole ruler in the Indian ocean, he thought of taking possession of Algiers. All these enterprises, for which he believed the remaining strength of the French navy adequate, were intended to serve a double purpose: to secure for France the indispensable colonial territory and to fight England. To subdue England in open battle was impossible, but after the loss of her East-Indian and Oriental trade, she would most probably sue for peace. The correctness of the Napoleonic problem has never been demonstrated, for a number of events prevented its execution. Spain withdrew from her alliance with France; this was followed by a series of continental wars, which, in turn, brought about the dissolution of the Russian alliance. Napoleon was consequently under sentence to carry on his world policy with insufficient means; the sins of the revolution were visited upon its heir and conqueror.*

When, in 1815, the congress of Vienna straightened out the affairs of Europe and the rest of the world, there remained but one empire whose power reached beyond the seas—England. That position she seemed destined to maintain,

* Roloff.

or even extend, in the future. For in the beginning of the nineteenth century the control of the sea route to foreign continents served England's growing power not less exclusively than did the new era of domination over nature, the era of mechanical means of intercommunications, of railroads, of steamships and telegraphs, the era of machinery for spinning and weaving, for working iron, wood, and every type of raw material.

Whatever of European commodities, European technical methods, and European culture and civilization during the first two-thirds of the past century was carried across the ocean or back, traveled almost entirely under the English flag. England was the mart for all trading activity between Europe and the transmarine countries. Not until shortly before the middle of the nineteenth century did Germany institute something like a direct communication with North America. England's gradual rise to a world power was plainly assured, owing to her cultural and economic influence abroad. There were individual territories under other than England's rule, but these were either enclaves, perhaps remnants of some non-English colonial dominion, or, like Asiatic Russia, compact tracts of land without special significance for international trade.

"The world is rapidly turning English"—

that utterance of an English statesman at the end of the nineteenth century, seemed indeed to define the inevitable fate of the non-European world. Such was the state of conditions at the founding of the new German Empire. If about the year 1870 the question had been asked, "Is there anywhere on the globe the slightest indication that a country, save England, or capital, save English capital, enjoys the prospects of a dominating influence on the economic and political development of nations?" there could have been but one answer, "There is not." The great East-Indian world was English. China scarcely knew of a European flag or a European language save the English, and China and India represent half of the human race. North America was partly English, partly a scion of English culture and civilization. In South America, English and European, with the exception of Spanish, were synonymous terms. Africa was unowned; yet every possibility in that unclaimed continent seemed England's and England's again.

CHAPTER II

GERMANY'S TRANSFORMATION

A SURVEY aiming to sketch the rise of England's world power seems essential to a better understanding of the political problems under discussion. These problems arose at the very moment it became apparent that Germany had become the potential rival of England's activity in world politics. Recent as Germany's interests were, they gave promise of modifying the century-old and seemingly final decisions regarding the apportionment and mastery of the world — decisions forced upon Europe by the Seven Years' War and the Napoleonic epoch. Not only Germany herself but the entire continent was struck with the suddenness of the change. To illustrate the point in question, let us recall a curious incident which occurred during the brief reign of Frederic III, towards the end of the period during which Bismarck conducted the political affairs of the empire.

Alexander of Battenberg, ex-prince of Bulgaria, had sued for the hand of a Prussian princess. As the result of a clash with the ruling interests of Russia, he had been exiled from

Bulgaria. In a certain sense, however, he remained pretender to the throne, and a marriage with the sister of the German emperor would have vastly improved his prospects. For that very reason, demands on the Prussian-German diplomacy would not have been wanting, as the prince was eager to regain his princely position in the Balkans. Obviously, Russia would have taken offense at the proposed move. So, not to involve Germany in the imminent conflict, Bismarck opposed the Hohenzollern-Battenberg match with unchecked and characteristic recklessness. He coined the phrase, oft since quoted, "For us the Balkan is not worth the bones of a Pommeranian musketeer." That was indeed a confession of Germany's disinterestedness in world politics, a confession unparalleled in the boldness of its wording; for the Turkish Orient was the very focus of political questions which concerned themselves with matters transcending the immediate interests of the powers in central Europe. If Germany was not even interested in the European East, the question is justified, "Why take any interest in the rest of the world?"

The frankness with which Germany disclaimed any interest in world politics was, a few years later, emphatically confirmed by the act of a foreign power. In 1890 England ceded to Germany the island of Helgoland. For that transaction she was well paid, as Germany gave up

many and by no means unimportant claims in Africa in exchange for the island. To realize the importance of England's step, it is but necessary to ask, "What price would the English pay today in order to regain Helgoland?" If Helgoland were today an English possession, Germany would probably not have been able to strengthen her navy to such a formidable degree as to arouse England's notice and apprehension. But no matter whether or not she would have attained that end, certain it is that a successful engagement of her naval forces with an English armada would be entirely out of the question. More than that; in case of war, Germany would be at England's mercy, as Helgoland controls a number of important strategic points — the inlets of the three rivers Elbe, Weser, and Jahde, as well as the entrance to the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal. Manifestly, England, when ceding Helgoland, was far from entertaining even the remotest suspicion that some time in the future Germany could grow into a world power with far-reaching interests which might seriously cross English foreign policies. Bismarck's utterance regarding the Balkan, as well as England's cession of Helgoland, impressively confirm the fact that two decades after the founding of the empire Germany was still far from displaying even a remote interest in a world policy.

Exactly twenty-five years after Bismarck had

voiced his opposition to the Battenberg marriage, with a view of preventing a clash with Russia in matters pertaining to the Orient, Germany was compelled to interfere, with the full weight of her armed forces, in a question which was destined to lead her infinitely farther into the Orient than her previous policy had kept her from entering it. Early in 1913, Russia threatened to send her troops into Turkish Armenia in order to bring Turkey to terms regarding the demands of the allied Balkans. Geographically as well as topographically Armenia is the key to the Anatolian peninsula and the lowlands of Mesopotamia. In the hands of Russia, that key would have shut out Turkey from the possibility of maintaining her independence. Germany, being greatly interested in the continued independence of the Turkish empire, notified Russia that the peace of Europe was endangered if Russian troops crossed the Armenian frontiers. There could be no doubt as to the meaning of Germany's message. The Russian invasion of Armenia was not carried out, the Turkish catastrophe thus being averted. What strange forces in the internal affairs of the German empire must have been at work to bring about that complete change of attitude toward the Orient!

Tracing the development and the controlling influences in the internal affairs of Germany from the reestablishment of the empire to the present

day, it seems that the economic changes in the life of the nation demand our first and undivided attention. Next in importance is a comprehensive study of the political consequences which determined not only the present political status of Germany but also the rise of a national consciousness and her standing in the judgment of other nations. Strange to say, the development of a German national consciousness has been considerably slower than the growth of its material and political basis. The appreciation of Germany's present relation to the rest of the world is, in the case of most Germans, younger by a decade or two than her actual participation in universal economics. It should be added that the slow process of developing a consciousness of national power from its inception to its full realization, at times endangered Germany's prospects of becoming a world power of the first rank. Certain political factions, for instance, employed their so-called conservative principles in a lasting opposition to every proposed increase of army or navy.

The political interests of any great nation rest invariably on the nature and extent of its economic life. In turn, the most accurate standard of modern economic activity is supplied by statistics on the foreign trade of the nation. Ten years after the founding of the German empire the joint values of her exports and imports

amounted to about one and one-quarter billion dollars. By 1891 the exports had grown to about seven-eighths of a billion dollars, the imports to something less than one and one-quarter billion dollars. Again, a decade later the value of her exports had been increased by three-eighths of a billion dollars, that of her imports by almost one-half a billion dollars, so that in 1902 her entire imports amounted to about one and one-half billion dollars, her exports to about one and one-quarter billion dollars. Accordingly, Germany's foreign trade about doubled its value within a period of twenty-two years.

In the year 1902, German economic activity began to increase by leaps and bounds. Within the six years following, between 1902 and 1907, import and export trade had increased more than within the preceding period from 1881 to 1902, a space of time nearly four times as long. The total German foreign trade, which in 1902 was valued at about two and three-quarter billion dollars, amounted in 1907 to about four and one-quarter billion dollars, with an annual increase of more than one-quarter billion dollars. Thus it has been shown that Germany's economic life measured in terms of her foreign trade after the reestablishment of the empire, progressed at first slowly, then somewhat faster, and since the beginning of the twentieth century at an almost unparalleled rate. Bismarck's

avowal of German disinterestedness and England's cession of Helgoland fall within the period of moderate growth. It is safe to suppose that England would not have decided upon so portentous a step if at that time Germany's share in international trade had assumed the flourishing proportions which characterized its growth after the year 1902.

The panic of 1908-9, which affected not only the German empire but also all other great centers of trade, temporarily arrested the economic progress. But since that time a renewed impetus in trading activity relieved the passing stringency. In 1912 Germany's foreign trade passed the five billion dollar mark. In 1890, the year of the so-called Zanzibar-Helgoland treaty, the total foreign trade of Germany amounted quantitatively to less than England's imports; in actual value, to about one-half of it. Ten years later Germany's foreign trade, compared with that of England, had assumed the ratio of 11:18. At the present time the ratio is 21:27. Twenty years ago, when Helgoland became German, it was regarded a fantastic and preposterous thought for Germany to rival England in her international commerce. What at that time seemed next to impossible may now be viewed as the accomplished task of another decade.

Let us examine further. In 1890, not only England but even France was Germany's com-

mercial superior. Shortly before that time the Germans had thought it too great a venture to build warships or commercial vessels of a larger type on their own wharfs. In 1885 the North German Lloyd displayed considerable reluctance in accepting certain conditions attached to the imperial mail service to the Orient. The government, in subsidizing Lloyd steamers for that purpose, had demanded that all boats carrying mail to and from the Far East were to be built in Germany from German building material. Today Germany's largest, fastest, and most modern men-of-war are German-built, not a ton of the material employed having been imported from abroad. Moreover, Germany leads the nations of the earth in the building of ocean liners, and may boast of claiming the two largest steamship companies in the world as her own.

A superficial comparison of Germany's foreign trade of a generation ago with that of today leads to the conviction that the numerical evolution observed, necessarily expresses a complete change in the conditions governing the economic life of the country. In the first half of the eighties, Germany for the last time exported part of her surplus grain. To our present generation it seems well-nigh incredible that Germany as late as three decades ago produced a quantity of grain sufficiently large to permit its exportation to other countries. Yet such were the facts.

At that time a hostile blockade of Germany's foreign trade on land and sea would have been, if not a matter of indifference, at least no fatal arrest of her economic life.

At the founding of the new German empire, the exports of manufactured articles exceeded the imports by only a few hundred million marks. The domestic food supply was greater than needed, and luxuries from foreign countries could have been dispensed with. Besides, the various industries of the empire were in no sense as dependent for their raw material on foreign markets as they are at the present time. If, on the other hand, today Germany's opponents, in the event of a war, could succeed for any length of time in cutting off the supply of foreign raw material and foodstuffs, and at the same time blocking her export trade in manufactured articles, the result would be disastrous for the economic life of the nation. Almost her entire industrial activity, notably the textile, metal, wood, and leather branches, would be so seriously affected as to bring dire suffering to half of the population.

Formerly the Germans lived preeminently on the proceeds of their domestic industry and resources, today they depend preeminently on their commercial intercourse with the world at large. Germany's system of training, second to none, her progress along technical and scientific lines,

and the effect of such progress in the manufacturing field, have all helped to engender a powerful creative energy trembling in every fiber of her industrial life. What is the value of a pound of pig-iron? Perhaps a penny or two. What is the value of that same pound of iron when wrought, say, into mainsprings for watches? Upward to twenty-five hundred dollars. Thus Germany refines the raw material, which she collects from everywhere — cotton, wool, wood, skins, metal, India rubber, oil seeds, oil, and in the process of refinement applies to it the results of her scientific research, her technical skill, her ingenuity, and her taste; in other words, her entire intellectual capital.

The finished product is now placed upon the market. From all over the world the nations come and buy her valuable commodities, and the price paid for them, in turn, serves a threefold purpose. It pays for new raw material; it yields the means of sustenance with life's ever-growing demands; thirdly, it increases in no small measure the national wealth of the people. When the German import and export trade amounted to only one and one-quarter billion dollars, the returns of her national industries were insignificant indeed; today, with the value of foreign trade multiplied many times over, the financial gain must have assumed enormous dimensions.

Twenty years ago, G. von Schmoller estimated the national wealth of Germany at fifty billion dollars. Today, no less an authority than Mr. Helfferich, president of the Deutsche Bank, rates it at seventy-five billion dollars; while the national economist, Steinmann-Bucher, fixes the amount at close to one hundred billion. Even on the basis of Helfferich's conservative estimate, Germany's total wealth exceeds today that of either England or France, though his per capita figures fall somewhat below those of the English and French. Following are Helfferich's figures: France, fifteen hundred dollars per capita; England, about twelve hundred and fifty dollars per capita; Germany, not quite one thousand dollars per capita. According to Steinmann-Bucher, Germany's per capita rate now equals that of France. For the present purpose, however, it seems of little moment whether or not Germany's wealth exceeds that of her rivals. One fact, and one only, stands out with convincing prominence, viz., Germany's tremendous growth in earning power. Helfferich places that growth, in the light of recent statistics, at from one and one-half billion to three billion dollars annually, an increase traceable to no other source than Germany's unmatched success in world economics. Deprived of, or substantially limited in, her free access to the world markets, her industrial life would suffer acute reverses.

Germany's growth as an economic power among the nations is not less reflected in the status of emigration, which, startling as it seemed a generation ago, has now decreased to almost imperceptible numbers. In fact, the tables seem to be turned; Germany's population is materially increased by immigration. In 1882, when Germany's population amounted to about forty-six million souls, two hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants left their native country for a lack of opportunity to develop. Within the ten years following, the annual loss thus incurred averaged one hundred and fifty thousand, more or less. It will be remembered that at that time Germany's foreign trade contributed but little to her industrial and national life. Today, her population has all but reached the seventy-million mark; at the same time, the annual emigration dropped to about fifteen thousand souls. Although having gained more than twenty million inhabitants, the country is able today to retain its normal annual growth of eight hundred thousand people, year after year, and to find occupation and sustenance for all of them. Besides, its working forces are supplemented by a large foreign contingent. Such a development could not be foreseen in 1890, the year of the Zanzibar-Helgoland treaty. While the growth of Germany's population was even at that time a matter of general knowledge, it remained an open ques-

tion if the increasing masses could be supported by her own resources.

In less than ten years after the first Anglo-German treaty of 1890, a beginning reaction of Germany's gradual transformation made itself felt in her foreign policy. In 1897, the Germans occupied Kiao-chow; in 1898, the emperor visited Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Damascus. The first of these two events called forth less discontentment in England than in Russia; for Russia, at that time, viewed all of northern China as a territory of paramount interest to her foreign policy. But when, in the course of the second event, the emperor, on his visit to Saladin's grave, laid down a kind of platform of friendly relations, politically speaking, between the German empire and the Mohammedan world, when it became known that German officers acted as instructors to the Turkish army, and when, in connection with the emperor's journey, the project of a Bagdad railroad assumed a more definite shape, England began to take notice and to display signs of growing nervousness. Only a short time had passed since English public opinion had been stirred up by another act of the German foreign policy, the congratulatory telegram of the emperor to President Krüger of Transvaal, at the imprisonment of the Jameson expeditionary forces near Burghersdorp. It seems that China, Mesopotamia, and South

Africa offered adequate grounds for fear of Germany's ambition, which appeared to have sprung into existence from nowhere. English public opinion, ever excitable as it is, not less than responsible statesmen of the British empire, seemed to apprehend a growing danger at the hands of Germany's startling political moves.

In the summer of 1900—England had not yet succeeded in subjecting the Boers—the German government submitted its great naval bill to the Reichstag. Two years prior, Secretary of State von Tirpitz had succeeded in bringing about a minor increase of the German naval forces. The program of 1900, however, was bound to cause a sensation by its very size, its completeness, and by the vast period of time which it covered. Yet the detailed and most impressive reasons supporting the bill and published by direction of the navy department, readily convinced competent authorities in Germany and abroad that the new naval program served but one purpose, viz., to express politically the vast changes in Germany's economic conditions. Little as in 1900 her commercial interests over the sea may be compared with those of the present time, and viewed, from a modern standpoint, as anything more than a mere beginning of Germany's actual development, it seemed yet certain that her growth would necessarily revolutionize her economic life from its very founda-

tion. Experience verified the correctness of that assumption. Yet not until after the navy department had conducted its campaign of enlightenment, by way of commentary to the naval bill, did the whole truth of the matter become a constantly growing factor in the consciousness of the nation. And yet it seems imperative untiringly to point out Germany's absolute dependence on the proceeds of her foreign trade, which, as time rolls by, must bear an ever-increasing burden of her economic existence.

CHAPTER III

THE POLICY OF ISOLATION

GERMANY'S successive political moves, beginning with the occupation of Kiao-chow, the Krüger telegram, and the emperor's trip to the Orient, and ending with the naval bill of 1900, constituted, perhaps by themselves, sufficient ground for England's beginning uneasiness. Nor had England misjudged the interrelation of Germany's policy and her economic growth, though, strangely enough, without acknowledging it as a necessary consequence. Winston Churchill, the English First Lord of the Admiralty, expressed the difference between the English navy and that of Germany in the well-known statement, "England's navy is a necessity; Germany's, more of a luxury." He emphatically denied the correctness of the assumption that the concern for the navy was founded on equal conditions in the two countries. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Churchill's words, but it cannot be denied that they betray a curious and unfair trend of political mind.

Strength, and nothing but strength, ever determines the political respect for the life interests

of a rival nation. History knows of no exception. Only as long as we are strong we may be certain that, in the mind of our envious neighbor, desire and better judgment counterbalance each other. If we lack strength, without being so insignificant that our very weakness is our protection, we may be certain that our rival, yielding to the natural and irresistible law of necessity, will in an opportune moment satisfy his desires at our expense. England would certainly not have failed to avail herself of that law of necessity if she had noticed Germany's growing commerce competing with and encroaching on her own interests, without a corresponding increase in the German military defense.

A casual observer, acquainted in some measure with the motives that actuated the foreign policy of Germany since the second half of the nineties, will emphatically deny any allegation that Germany ever assumed a threatening attitude toward England. Her sole object was to establish, primarily, ways and means for the support and expansion of her trading operations abroad, and only in the second place preventive measures, safeguarding her interests against hostile attacks. Despite this fact, England persistently interprets the German foreign policy, more especially that pertaining to the Orient, either as a menace to her own freedom of decision in political affairs, or as a forceful pressure to respect the wishes of

the German government. From that very standpoint, England watched, with growing concern, the increase of the German navy, and, above all, the project of the Bagdad railroad.

From the very first, the Bagdad railroad was intended to connect Constantinople and the military bases of Turkey, in Asia Minor, directly with Syria and the provinces at the Tigris and Euphrates. It seemed a matter of course that the railroad planned was, at the same time, likely to develop Turkey's economic and financial strength, which, in turn, was capable of growing into a power of latent political significance. England had her misgivings; could not the whole plan be a threat or even a plot calculated to undermine England's position in Egypt? It was but natural to suppose that the Bagdad railroad, jointly with the Syrian and Arabian lines, which were partly planned, partly either building or completed, might serve the transport of Turkish troops in the direction of Egypt. The junction of the Bagdad railroad with the Syrian lines is today all but an accomplished fact, awaiting only the completion of the Taurus and Amanus tunnels; and yet a distance of four hundred kilometers untraversed by rails separates Haifa, the railroad terminal at the foot of the Carmel promontory, from the Suez canal. But even that distance could, in the event of war, be covered by a large army, particularly with the assist-

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ance of so-called field railroads. Granting a German-Turkish alliance and other conditions less easily realized, there is no denying that the Bagdad railroad is equal to a political life insurance for Germany.

In spite of all these facts, there is not the slightest reason for assuming that Germany would ever attack England, except possibly the one that, after the fashion of Frederick the Great in the Seven Years' War, she may want to forestall a hostile English surprise, concerning which she had previously received definite information. Such a case would make her, before the world, the aggressor, while, in reality, her move would clearly be defensive. In any case, war with England would mean for Germany a risk of the gravest consequences. No need of describing the results if England were victorious. If Germany would win, she would scarcely be able to enjoy the fruits of her victory, for in that self-same moment Europe would unite in arms against the threatening ascendency of her power.

Impossible and illogical as the plan of a German attack appears to the reasoning mind, England persisted in her belief — or did she find the thought intolerable that the Bagdad railroad may at some future period serve Germany's interests abroad? Egypt controls the Suez canal, and the Suez canal is England's short cut to India, Eastern Asia, Australia, and East Africa.

If England some day lost her control over the canal, she could communicate with her possessions in the Indian and Pacific oceans only by way of the troublesome route around the Cape of Good Hope. That fact alone may endanger her position in East India. Neither is South Africa longer an assured English possession. South Africa is today governed by Africans speaking the Dutch tongue, the former Boers, for whom that term seems less and less appropriate. Before the great South African war, the Africans were "Boers" in fact—peasants with a character peculiar to the tillers of the soil.

If a Boer had six sons and six daughters, the daughters were sure to marry young Boer farmers, probably cattle raisers, and the sons would turn to the occupation of their father, partly on the open territory adjoining the frontiers of the settlement, partly on the land already improved, which for their benefit was cut up into subdivisions. That system was made possible by the constant rise of land values under the influence of a flourishing mining industry. But even during the great South African war, conditions began to change, as only part of the rising generation took up farming as a business. Today it is not rare to see young Africans in positions which were formerly filled exclusively by Englishmen from England, men of a metropolitan-imperialistic trend of mind. We meet young

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Africans in every kind of responsible positions and callings — as business men, bankers, engineers, lawyers, etc. The British element in South Africa thus lost most of its traditional privileges.

The fact that the Boers regained their autonomy only after their defeat, the origin and rise of the South African Union, and the present status of the native population in responsible and commanding positions, are all evidences of a thorough transformation in the character of the country. It will be remembered that during the great South African strike, early in 1914, the South African government, under General Louis Botha, former Boer general in the war with England, made short work of the English labor leaders by ordering them out of the country and, without ceremony, sending them to England. That they were English subjects like the Boers themselves, at least in name, did not change matters in the least. The government justified its act by the provision that undesirable aliens must at all hazards be deported.

Applied to English subjects in South Africa, that act seemed, after all, a questionable proceeding; yet the British government had no means to prevent it. Similarly, the armed forces of South Africa, except the relatively small number of regular Imperials, are under the control of the Boer government. England could therefore

under no circumstances hope to subject South Africa in case that country some day should want to be independent. A repetition of the Boer war, as waged fifteen years ago, is impossible; nor does there seem to be any doubt that the countries between the Cape and the Zambesi are part and parcel of the British empire only by the good will and a prevailing practical interest of the Dutch South Africans.

The state of affairs in South Africa, as set forth, most naturally renders the continued control of Egypt of supreme importance for England. Moreover, it explains the solicitous manner with which that country watches over Egypt. In the last few years of old Queen Victoria, the English foreign policy exhibited a certain reluctance in deciding upon political moves of great importance — an attitude easily explained by a fitting regard for the advanced age of the sovereign, and paralleled by the recent policy of Austria-Hungary. No sooner had the queen passed away, and Edward VII ascended the British throne, than a change in the English policy with regard to the Orient became noticeable.

During the first years of King Edward's rule, England seemed to waver between two plans. Germany's expansion, in so far as England's interests may be endangered by it, must be either checked, by a so-called entente cordiale, or para-

lyzed by means of a plan later known as the policy of isolation. A publication from a Japanese source, a few years ago, leaves no doubt that an effort along the line of the first alternative had actually been launched. An attempt had been made to bring about an English-German-Japanese entente directed against Russia. Two reasons, among other considerations, prompted the German diplomacy to reject the proposals put forth, viz., a prudent regard for Russia, and certain obligations which, in all probability, would be demanded by the terms of the new treaty — limitations likely to hamper Germany's freedom of action in the Orient and in other parts of the world.

Above all, Germany was compelled to decline because she lacked the necessary strength for an alliance with England. England, thereupon, sought to accomplish her purpose more directly, though there is no doubt that a friendly agreement with Germany eventually would have served a similar end. Her goal was no other than to sever Arabia, the countries adjoining the Euphrates and Tigris, and southern Syria from Turkey, with a view of incorporating them, in some fashion or other, into the enormous territory under her domination. If England were able to exercise a political control, assured against hostile influence, over the territory between the Gulf of Persia and the eastern Mediterranean coast,

she may look upon Egypt as immune from attack. Even the completion of a railroad, such as the present German-Turkish plan of a Bagdad line, could not endanger the security of that country. An unquestionable advantage would be gained by England if she were able to carry out the plan of her own Bagdad railroad, which was designed as something of a counterpart to the German railroad, so called.

The English railroad, not less than the German, was planned to start from some point at the Gulf of Persia, that is to say, at the edge of a body of water under direct and efficient control of the English. Beyond Bagdad, the English railroad, unlike the German, would not have crossed to Asia Minor by way of Mesopotamia and Syria, but would have run along the Euphrates across the Oasis of Palmyra, and thence, by way of either Damascus or some other town, to the Mediterranean Sea. The western terminal at the coast would thus have been flanked by the English positions, respectively, in Egypt and on the island of Cyprus.

It is difficult to picture something of greater interest to England than the plan of the Bagdad railroad as worked out by the noted engineer, Willcocks. Syria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Arabia would be opened to economic development, and, at the same time, come under England's most rigid supervision. Besides, Constan-

tinople and Anatolia, the centers of Turkey's military and political administration, would be entirely out of touch with the newly opened territories. Efforts have not been lacking, on the part of England, to support the plan of her Bagdad railroad by plausible economic argumentation. It was set forth that only by rail the future products of the extensive Babylonian irrigation land could be carried to the Mediterranean Sea at low freight rates; on the other hand, the long Bagdad railroad would not pay if the said products would travel on sea through the Gulf of Persia and the Suez canal. On its face, that argument seems sound; yet upon examination it will be found untenable for the following reason: The tracks of the railroad planned by England lead, for a greater part, through a waterless desert, while those of the German-Turkish line pass partly through well-cultivated land, partly over tracts capable of the best possible cultivation. Besides, the freight rates, even for the direct Bagdad-Mediterranean traffic, would be scarcely higher than those provided by the English project now abandoned. No doubt Germany would have been forced to accept England's plan if, after the Boer war, she had joined with her and Japan in an English-German-Japanese alliance.

About the time when King Edward took over the scepter from Queen Victoria, Willcocks,

England's distinguished creator of her Bagdad railroad plans, revealed, in a most noteworthy publication, the aims of the English policy regarding the vast plain between the Lebanon Mountains and the mouth of the Euphrates and Tigris. In a lecture given in the winter of 1900-1901, before the Geographical Society in Cairo, he declared that the restoration of Babylon's ancient cultivation on the basis of figures prepared by officers of the Anglo-Indian surveying service was but half of the task; English engineers and English capital would accomplish that share of the enterprise. But it would certainly be of equal importance to settle the newly regained land with English subjects, emigrants from Egypt and East India. By that proposal, Willcocks laid bare his thorough understanding of the difficulties involved. It is indeed easier to build a system of dams, canals, and locks to restore the productive Babylon of antiquity and of the early Arabian era than to procure the many millions of people necessary to cultivate the land to be reclaimed.

However, the plan of an immigration, on an enormous scale, into Babylon, from the adjoining countries of the British empire, carries with it the conviction of overt political intentions; for it is difficult to conceive that English subjects, on arriving in Babylon, become naturalized Turkish subjects. Not satisfied with disclosing, from the

very start, the political character inherent in the policy of settling Babylonia, Willcocks placed his idea on a particularly anti-German platform by raising the insidious question as to what name would be given to the great canal, the principal source of irrigation for the land around Bagdad — the canal of the Emperor of India or the canal of the Emperor of Germany.

The policy of England could have scarcely been expressed in terms more transparent. For that reason, Lord Curzon's address, delivered at about the same time as Willcocks' lecture in Cairo, serves but as a verification of a fact previously known. In a speech anent the East Indian budget, Curzon, at that time viceroy of India, emphatically declared it was more than time for England to remember the political necessity of claiming the entire "Middle East" as a territory of her particular interests. The "Middle East" referred to by the viceroy was no less than all lands between the two entrances to the Indian Ocean, respectively at Suez and at Singapore, India, and the land adjoining, Arabia, Persia, the Gulf of Persia and the vast tracts west of it as far as the Mediterranean Sea.

In connection with the English plan to establish a protectorate over the land around Bagdad and adjoining the Bagdad railroad, it should be remembered that England was no longer interested in the conservation of the Turkish posses-

sions, a cause which she had resolutely espoused as late as 1878 at the congress of Berlin. The change in England's attitude dates back to the moment when she looked upon Turkey no longer as a wall that would effectually stop the Russian expansion, but rather as a pawn in the political chess of Germany. The idea of Turkey's territorial integrity was now usurped by a thought of an entirely different kind, viz., the establishment of a vast Mohammedan commonwealth under English protection, a commonwealth, no longer led by the Turkish, but by the Arabian element.

Even as matters are, the Turks are not well liked in those districts of their own country where the Arabian language is spoken. Not later than fifteen years ago, for example, there was mention, in both Bagdad and Damascus, of the foreign yoke of the Turkish barbarians. If Turkey were to lose these provinces, the position of the Turkish sultan as Caliph, that is, as the spiritual ruler of all faithful, would become untenable. In that event, the head of the most important "Arabian" country, the Khedive of Egypt, is the logical candidate for the position as Caliph. The Khedive is an English vassal, a fact which will certainly contribute to the furtherance of England's schemes. Bagdad, Mecca, Jerusalem, Cairo, perhaps even Damascus, would have become cities in the empire of the new Egyptian-Arabian Caliph, cities under the supreme guar-

dianship of England. One fact alone: Mecca under the protectorate of England, would be an invaluable guaranty for the security of English possessions in the Mohammedan empire, above all, in India.

No mistake can be made if the ideas set forth above are considered as the final goal of England, ideas which originated at the beginning of King Edward's reign and occupied her foreign policy for ten years after the unsuccessful attempt to isolate Germany by means of an alliance. The king must have been convinced that the desired operation on the political body of the Turkish empire, if successful, would arouse Germany's opposition or even active resistance. He must have known that the dissolution of the Turkish empire would be a severe blow to the safety of Germany's political interests. England's next move was, therefore, to produce a political combination of such strength that Germany either did not venture resistance or, if she did, would be crushed into submission.

England's success hinged, above anything else, on the cooperation of Russia and France. Russia, no doubt, was very strong and seemed little inclined to lend herself to an English policy calculated to deprive Turkey of her possessions outside of Asia Minor, without paying due regard to the traditional Russian aspirations in the Orient. To make the government of the Czar

subservient to England's aims it was therefore necessary, above all, to weaken the empire, a task accomplished by an Anglo-Japanese alliance and Japan's subsequent declaration of war on Russia. England's purpose to reduce Russia's power and pride was gained as the result of the Russo-Japanese war; true enough, to a far greater extent than England had expected; for in the decisive moment the very opposite of the much desired effect took place. Two years after peace between the warring nations had been concluded, an Anglo-Russian treaty regarding Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, etc., was signed (1907). According to the terms of that treaty, at least of the portion made public, the boundaries of the disputed territory in Central Asia were fixed and Persia was divided into a Russian, an English, and an ostensibly neutral zone of influence. Besides, a settlement of the Turkish question was provided in a way that corresponded entirely with England's wishes and yet permitted Russia's participation in the business on hand.

Meanwhile, England had come to an understanding with France, by conceding to her the claim to Morocco. In official recognition of that most important concession, France acknowledged, without reserve, all paramount rights and privileges of England in Egypt. Fair and just as that exchange appeared, the close observer could not fail to see that the acquisition of Morocco

was an infinitely greater gain for France than the ultimate renunciation of her former wishes in Egypt was a loss. Obviously, the improbable equation Morocco = Egypt covered something of importance. And important it was indeed. England gained not only France's assurance of political disinterestedness in Egypt, a concession of no practical moment, but also her consent for the undisturbed pursuance of England's policy in the Orient.

Insignificant as the English-French business transaction regarding Morocco seemed, particularly in its early stages, it was destined to cause a conflict with Germany. German diplomacy was not so innocent as to interpret the Morocco affair on its face value, and, having discovered the actual facts in the case, could not afford to play the rôle of a disinterested spectator. Moreover, England and France had negotiated concerning Morocco without notifying Germany, or, what seems still more striking, without even preserving the outward form of diplomatic respect for her government. Was Germany willing to suffer a loss of prestige? Would she not insist, despite the critical character of the situation, that the Morocco negotiations be reopened and no decision be considered final without her consent?

It is only natural that Germany's forthcoming demand of a European conference anent the

Morocco affair should meet with opposition, particularly with that of France. No doubt, Germany would not only disapprove of part of the program but, in all probability, formulate conditions of her own. The German demands were not long wanting. In substance they amounted to this, that France and England should present the terms of the Morocco contract before the conference and consent to a thoroughgoing revision of all details, not without looking to the interests of the offended party. That under the prevailing circumstances France agreed to the so-called Algeciras conference, must certainly be looked upon as a formal and material victory of German diplomacy.

French opposition, it will be remembered, was at that time so strong that Delcasse, the French secretary of foreign affairs, in the summer of 1905, was ready to declare war. The majority of his colleagues objected, first, because Russia, on account of the after-effects of her war with Japan, was unable to take part, and secondly because the French army, in spite of protracted preparations, was not ready for the field. The outcome of the Algeciras conference was therefore twofold: On the one hand, the integrity and independence of Morocco were guaranteed; on the other, certain special interests and privileges in Morocco were conceded to France and Spain. To force the French completely out of

Morocco did not seem possible unless Germany were willing to make war for so trivial a reason. In fact, nobody had seriously entertained that thought. What Germany did gain was satisfaction for the insult of the diplomatic disregard previously explained. Withal it was evident that neither with regard to Morocco, nor concerning all other points which had led to the Algeciras conference, the last word had been spoken.

Outwardly, to be sure, Germany's prestige, her commercial interests in Morocco, and a consideration for her peculiar position in the eyes of the Mohammedan world had to be given a high degree of importance as it would have been imprudent to expose to public opinion the dangerous significance of the Morocco question — dangerous for the future of Germany and for the peace of Europe. To those, more intimately acquainted with the intricacies of international politics, it was clear that the forcing of the Algeciras conference and the partial retreat of the French from their actual or potential positions in Morocco was only a tentative success. The tension of political opposition underlying the whole situation was not relieved by the temporary victory.

England's policy regarding the Turkish Orient was plainly designed, within a year or two after the close of the Russo-Japanese war, to strike the decisive blow which she had long since

been preparing. To reinforce the intended pressure against Germany, she had invented a special instrument — the dreadnaught. The basic thought which had led to the construction of so new and powerful a type of battleship was to outclass with all possible speed the naval forces of Germany. Hitherto, the heavy armament of first rate battleships had consisted of four giant guns mounted in revolving turrets; furthermore of a greater or smaller artillery of medium caliber which, though destructive in its effect, did not carry as far as the heaviest cannons.

The first dreadnaught built by England carried no medium artillery at all, but, instead, had in place of the customary four, twelve giant guns in its revolving turrets. At the same time, the new type developed greater speed than the old battleships. The purpose of this innovation is perfectly clear. The dreadnaught is able, by virtue of its superior speed, to carry on a fight at a distance that makes an effective operation of the hostile medium artillery extremely difficult or even impossible. Besides, it operates with twelve heavy guns as against four of the enemy. The superiority of the dreadnaught was, therefore, great enough to render the new type practically equivalent to three of the older model battleships. The success of the policy of intimidation, with the help of the dreadnaughts, naturally depended, in a large measure, upon Eng-

land's ability to force a speedy issue. Germany must either yield or be crushed, before she had time to imitate the new type of battleship. If Germany did succeed to any extent, the result would be a decrease rather than an increase of England's superior strength on the sea; for the building of dreadnaughts on both sides would result in a corresponding depreciation of the old types of battleships. In that case, Germany's chances to overtake England would be infinitely greater than in the event of the previous status of England's manifold superiority on the sea.

All such considerations, even a possible delay in deciding the issue, did not seem noticeably to disturb England's assurance. Apparently, responsible English naval architects and men high in authority depended in great measure on Germany's technical and financial inability to take up the building of dreadnaughts. England committed an egregious error in thus underrating the latent strength of her opponent. At the same time, her policy of isolation began to exhibit serious flaws. The political consequences of these miscalculations were soon forthcoming.

CHAPTER IV

TENSION AND RECONCILIATION WITH ENGLAND

RUSSIA must be regarded as a very important factor in England's political manipulations. Without the express consent of Russia, it was impossible to reduce Turkey's power by limiting her rule practically to the peninsula of Asia Minor. It will be remembered that Russia, during the rapid development of her foreign policy, prior to the war with Japan, was not willing to agree to any plan in the Orient by which she would become a mere tool of England. To force Russia into submission, she would have to be defeated. This was accomplished with the Japanese armies and with English money. England's final move to gain her purpose was to make Russia a partner in the Turkish deal.

How far Russia's ambition extended beyond her logical share in the bargain (Armenia and the adjoining tracts in Asia Minor) can best be inferred from a statement issued from an official source in Russia soon after the Russian-English treaty, namely, the next few years would witness a strengthening of Russia's policy in the direction of the Gulf of Iskanderun. In this way Russia

made it plain that, beyond Armenia, the Mediterranean coast was her objective point. Whether or not England's promises to Russia, in the event that the Turkish crisis was successfully launched, included the Armenia-Iskanderun program, is a matter of speculation. In all probability, it did not. But whether such was her promise or not is a negligible factor in view of one indisputable fact: Germany's influence, interests, and railroad plans on the other side of the Taurus mountain range would have been doomed to abandonment.

In 1907, every detail of the Anglo-Russian agreement was perfect; in another year, the decisive blow could be dealt. In June, 1908, Edward VII and the Czar met at the Russian naval station Reval. A month and a half later, the meeting of the Czar with the President of the French Republic took place. Meanwhile, the Young-Turkish revolution had broken out in Constantinople, resulting in a temporary shift in the conditions of the Orient. It is a well known fact today, that in the summer of 1908 all Europe not only was in great fear of war, but stood in imminent peril of being embroiled in a bloody conflict.

It is no longer a secret that the visit of the French president in Russia had been prepared for some time past. The sudden changes at the Bosporus, a few days prior to the meeting, could not have been foreseen by any one. The

immediate purpose of the two meetings at Reval was the launching of a scheme of intervention in Macedonia. The Macedonian question had, for a number of years, been the most serious point in the inner-Turkish policy; at the same time, it offered to the foreign powers the best possible opportunity for interference. German diplomacy was, of course, well informed as to the steps planned; nor is it a secret today that the German naval forces, as in fact all European navies, were at that time in a state of utmost preparedness.

The joint demand of England, Russia, and France with regard to Macedonia would in all probability have been rejected by the Sultan. The Turkish refusal would then have been considered sufficient reason for interference. No matter what the outcome was, each of the powers, party to the agreement, above all, England, was to gain effective control over the territory in question. For Germany, that would have meant the choice between peace and war. Certain it seems that King Edward, the governing power of the isolation, had set his mark less upon a war than upon forcing Germany to submission without active resistance; in fact, he seemed to be all but convinced that at the critical moment the ruling authorities in Germany would lack courage to declare war. The unexpected revolution in Turkey upset the entire program, so that England

had cause to postpone the forceful issue of the crisis in the Orient. To explain her willingness to wait, it is only necessary to study the conditions which tended to alienate the Young Turks from Germany and caused them to join the trend of England's policy.

The Young Turks, liberals of every shade, believed that Germany had been a staunch supporter of Abdul Hamid's tyrannical system of government and that the German influence constituted a decided danger for the era of liberalism. That thought was zealously supported by the English and French press in Constantinople. The Young Turkish liberalism showed in the beginning a decided leaning toward a certain form of Anglomania. England, the home of liberty, of parliaments, of popular government — those were the catch phrases promulgated in the daily papers. If it were possible to sever the political ties between Turkey and Germany and to build up a politico-moral protectorate over the Young-Turkish government, similar to the temporary relation of Napoleonic France to Italy, the English interest would be served as well as, or even better, than by an agreement with France and Russia.

The logical sequence of facts, however, led the Young-Turkish committee speedily back to a revival of the former relation with Germany. Suddenly the crisis seemed to approach from an

entirely unsuspected quarter. On October 5 Austria-Hungary proclaimed its sovereignty over Bosnia. Although thereby the actual state of affairs suffered no change in the least, as Bosnia for thirty years had been an Austrian possession under Austria's administration, the annexation caused an enormous excitement in Servia. For the first time since the misfortune of the Japanese war, Russia, having assured herself of Italy's cooperation, made a hostile move on the Balkans. Ever since the failures in Tunis and Abyssinia, Italy, in consequence of the king's marriage with a princess of Montenegro, had her eye on the Balkans, and public opinion in Italy grew increasingly anxious for the proffered chance to possess a strip of land on the other side of the Adriatic Sea. That ambition realized, the commercial existence of Austria-Hungary would have been endangered, as Italian possessions on both sides of the Straits of Otranto were likely to imperil her outlet upon the open sea.

On the other hand, Albania proved a particularly enticing bait to sever Italy's connection with the Triple Alliance and induce her to join the English-Russian-French group directed against Germany. Russia was particularly active in bringing about that conversion. The great Slav empire obviously hoped that, during the impending settlement of the Turkish question, exceptional advantages would be gained by a

cooperation with Italy. Early in 1909 the whole situation was in a highly critical stage. Servia's attitude, stirred up and supported by Russia, forced Austria-Hungary to a partial though vigorously conducted mobilization. Russia was pleased with her own political conduct, which was no doubt calculated to express her readiness to go to war, and the Russian press, together with a number of irresponsible Panslavic organizations, continued to add fuel to the fire which was threatening to break forth into a great European conflagration.

It had not been England's aim to force the crisis by a general European war, which could not be avoided if, with Russia's support, the threatening conflict between Austria-Hungary and Servia were to break out openly. France had large financial interests in Turkey and in the Balkans, while her navy, owing to the poor quality of powder, was in no condition to fight. Above all, Russia was unable to take the field. Her armed forces had so little recuperated from the effects of the war with Japan, and the subsequent revolution, that she could not enter a great European war with any hope for success. The entire Russian agitation, encouraging Servia and threatening Austria-Hungary and Germany, was calculated to intimidate the opponent, but was destined to collapse when Germany called the bluff.

On March 20, the German ambassador in St. Petersburg declared that Germany had decided not to influence Austria's independent action with regard to the Servian controversy, and if necessary, to grant her ally every support her life-interests seem to demand. Thereupon Russia was obliged to put her cards on the table, a move equally fatal to Russia's prestige and to the policy of the intended isolation of Germany. For now it had become a matter of universal knowledge that Russia lacked the military strength required for the successful pursuance of her political aims.

A moment of significant consequences for the future was the growing conviction, in the political circles of Russia, that the government had been forced to yield in the Bosnian question by a threatening letter of the emperor to the Czar. So violently did that supposed pressure on Russia act on the public feeling that, since the spring of 1909, it became a conscious factor in the anti-German spirit throughout the empire. In fact, as the story of the letter gained increasing credence in the cultured strata of Russian society, the latent hostility against Germany assumed extraordinary proportions. It must not be forgotten that the agreement with England, in 1907, meant a return of Russia's policy to its former aim, that is, expansion in the direction of the Mediterranean. That policy is pursued this very day in a determined and energetic manner by

both the government and Russian public opinion, in so far as it is interested in national affairs. Evidently, there is only one way to attain that end, viz., the political dissolution of the Turkish empire.

That Russia fails to recognize the necessity which impels Germany to give Turkey her political support is perfectly clear and pardonable. As a matter of fact it is difficult for any nation, cherishing high hopes and aspirations for her own national welfare, to understand Germany's policy with regard to the Orient. And yet the riddle is not hard to read. The almost passionate persistence of the entire Russian nation to gain an outlet upon the Mediterranean Sea touches the very core of Germany's interest in the continued existence of Asiatic Turkey as an independent power. To understand that one fact in all its bearings upon Germany's economic future is to appreciate the political situation involved.

The Turkish empire, surrounded as it is by covetous neighbors, most naturally looks for protection to a power that has preferably no territorial interests in the Orient. That requirement is fulfilled by Germany, which, in turn, would suffer considerably if Turkey were to be wiped out. It is plain that if Russia and England are to become the principal heirs of Turkey, their territorial and political power would thereby be greatly increased. But even in the event that a

goodly share of Turkey would fall to Germany, that country would experience troubles without end; for Russia, and, in a certain sense, France and Italy are neighbors of Turkey with her present boundaries, and as such are in the position to occupy and defend their respective shares, on land and sea. Germany, on the other hand, has no direct communication with the Orient. The land route leads not only through Austria-Hungary, but also through Roumania and Bulgaria, and in order to reach the coast of Asia Minor and Syria by water it would be necessary to round almost all of Europe by way of the English Channel, the Straits of Gibraltar, and the French-English Mediterranean routes.

Today it would indeed be a heavy burden for Germany to retain any territory in the Orient, over which she had an immediate control. A German Asia Minor or Mesopotamia is conceivable only if at least Russia and her ally France be compelled to renounce their aims and ideals; or, in other words, if the outcome of a world war favor the interests of Germany. Obviously, the present German policy cannot seriously entertain a prospect of such far-reaching consequences. Contrary to the standpoint occupied by responsible German circles, Russian public opinion clamors loudly for the forcible pursuance of an aim which intrinsically agrees with the policy of the government. The consequences of

Germany's estimate of the political situation, self-evident as they are, will form the contents of another chapter.

The Young-Turkish revolution and Russia's military impotence, which came to light a year later as the consequence of her defeat at the hands of Japan, resulted, at least for the time being, in a failure of England's policy of isolation as originally conceived. Britain's policy, it will be remembered, aimed at Germany's immediate or gradual surrender, in fact or in spirit, to the extensive English program in the Orient, by means of dreadnaughts and an alliance with Russia and France. If the English plan had been successful, Germany's defeat would have been overwhelming. Even Prussia's retreat to Olmütz, which may have been considered its closest parallel, presents superior features, as in the present case it would have been impossible to recover from the crushing blow.

It seemed as if the death of Edward VII in May, the year following, was an accidental or even predestined occurrence, confirming, as it were, the failure of a policy so zealously pursued by that ruler since the beginning of his reign. Though Edward's death did not alter the fundamental relation of the powers, particularly that between Great Britain and Germany, yet the English policy lost a characteristic which was highly effective though scarcely discernible,

namely, the deliberate and active participation of a master mind in shaping a political situation hostile to the interests of the German empire.

Another factor of considerable moment for strengthening Germany's power henceforth gained prominence. The effects of England's dreadnaught policy made themselves felt. Until this policy had become effective, England had unquestionably the manifold naval ascendency over Germany. Only by extraordinary efforts could Germany hope to raise her fleet numerically to the level of the English navy. On the part of England, such efforts might result either in a corresponding increase of the English navy or in England's decision to force a clash while she was still certain of her superior strength. If, on the other hand, Germany decided to follow England's example in building dreadnaughts, the disparity of the two navies would, from the very beginning, be considerably smaller than before. At the same time, the ships of the older type would depreciate equally on both sides, obviously to the disadvantage of England's fighting power.

Now, England argued that even if the Oriental crisis were deferred, the Germans would not be in the position offhand to adopt the new type of battleship; and that, furthermore, they would grudge the expenses connected with the building of dreadnaughts, expenses amounting to double the cost of an older type line-of-battle ship. As

a matter of fact, the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal had to be rebuilt to meet the needs of the new battleships; an enterprise which, in addition to the extensive alterations in the various German naval ports, entailed the expenditure of millions of dollars. The comprehensive view demanded by the circumstances and the readiness to make great financial sacrifices are two virtues which the British believed sorely lacking in the German nation, a misjudgment of the actual state of affairs shared alike by the rank and file of the nation as well as by the highest government officials.

In this connection, two other factors contributing to England's political fiasco deserve mention. It had been impossible for England to foresee the Young-Turkish revolution and the subsequent failure to win Young Turkey over to the English side, promising as that move appeared at the start. In addition, Russia's total defeat in the war with Japan, the annihilation of her fleet, and the revolution, which for a time threatened to disintegrate her civil and military organizations, all tended completely to upset the program which England had carefully worked out. The Japanese medicine which England had prescribed for Russia was successful, though it all but killed the patient.

If nothing but the relative strength of the two navies had been the decisive factor, England

could barely have found a time more opportune to attack her opponent successfully than the early stage of the new naval era, for already a number of English dreadnaughts were afloat, when Germany had not yet launched her first battleship of the new type. And yet it seems plain why England, weighing the pros and cons, did not venture the attack. We need but think of Russia's military plight which would prevent her and her ally France from giving England the indispensable assistance. It is indeed a risky enterprise for any nation to plunge into a world war on the theory that by deferring the encounter, a favorable opportunity to conquer the opponent may be lost. In spite of all, there remains the one indisputable fact that England, by her failure to launch out, had herself called into question her absolute supremacy on the sea which had been one of the basic factors of her long cherished plan of isolating Germany.

Two years later, when the Morocco question for the second time entered into a dangerously acute stage, the condition of the German navy, with reference to the construction of dreadnaughts and minor war accessories, gained considerable prominence. It will be remembered that in the Algeciras conference France had conceded under pressure to recognize the independence and territorial integrity of Morocco. Nevertheless she was able, by means of dexterous

shifts, to gain advantages which did not exactly violate the terms of the Morocco agreement. For a time the French carefully avoided any overt acts of sufficient importance to call forth emphatic protests on the part of Germany. Suddenly the French government decided to terminate that rather prudent policy by a somewhat impatient and overhasty act — an advance of a whole army on the capital of Morocco. This unexpected move was so clearly a violation of the Algeciras agreement that Germany forthwith decided to register an energetic protest, which she effected by sending the small cruiser *Panther* to Agadir, a harbor in South Morocco.

Germany's warlike procedure seemed, strangely enough, a cause for renewed and increasingly bitter attacks on the foreign policy of the German government, which from the start had been criticized for its attitude in the Morocco affairs by a part of the German press. Now, public opinion was certainly not justified in its criticism of the government if the entire Morocco affair had been viewed, as it should have been, in the light of the English-French entente and the political aims of England in the Orient.

It is always necessary to keep in mind England's ambition to take possession of Arabia and the land bordering the Euphrates as a protective territory, which would render the English positions in Egypt immune from aggression. To

secure the consent of France, she had willingly given up what claims she had for the acquisition of Morocco. If now Germany meant to assert her rights and interests on a larger scope in Morocco, that country was practically sure to encounter the joint opposition of England and France. Morocco had been ceded to France in the nature of a present which would certainly fall short of its purpose if England could not guarantee to France the incontestable title to the much coveted prize.

Such were the facts at the bottom of the entire transaction, in view of which it was plainly no mean success for the German policy to force a renewed discussion of the French-English Morocco business *post factum* before an international conference, and thereby to limit the far-reaching plans of the French republic.

Another fact which the critics of Germany's foreign policy failed to take into account was the unprepared state of the navy, without which Germany could not let matters come to the point of breaking, except in case of utmost emergency. Germany's opponents were, of course, well aware of these shortcomings. Notably the so-called Bangerman faction accused the government of weakness in its attitude toward the Morocco crisis of 1911. Obviously it was not known to the critics that at the time of the *Panther's* visit to Agadir, the rebuilding of the Kaiser Wilhelm

Canal was only half completed, that the enlargement of Helgoland into a strong sea fort was still far from finished, and that the numerical strength of the navy, particularly with reference to the dreadnaughts and auxiliary implements, compared at that time far more unfavorably with the English naval forces than it did three years later.

To provoke a war under such unfavorable conditions would indeed have been foolish, doubly so in the face of certain knowledge that the chances for success would be vastly better in the future. If Germany had insisted upon the acquisition of South Morocco, France and England would have been forced into the conflict. The French would tolerate the Germans as their neighbors in Morocco only after a defeat, for what would prevent the Germans, once in Morocco, from supplying the natives, the Algerians, the Senegalese, and other French subjects, with arms, money, and military leaders? What would prevent them, indeed, at the first favorable opportunity from instigating a rebellion or even breaking up the French colonial empire in North Africa? Every rational foreign policy aims to ascertain the life interests of its adversary, and ventures an attack only with a view of forcing the opponent into conditions which it desires for the benefit of its own propagation.

When, in 1911, a French army marched into the interior of Morocco and occupied the capital,

Germany, if it was at all ready to take official notice of that move, could not hesitate any longer to point out the flagrant violation of the Algeciras treaty. In doing so, she had to consider, and as a matter of fact did consider, that France was in the position to react in two different ways on Germany's move of diplomacy. She might threaten, "Hands off Morocco, or we shall fight you;" or she might ask, "What will you take for giving up your claims on Morocco?" Germany's bold venture at Agadir was the result of her acquaintance with Russia's lack of military preparedness. It was no secret in the inner political circles that the war with Japan had wrought havoc upon the Russian army, and that the reorganization had not progressed sufficiently to warrant active participation in an Anglo-French war against Germany. Without the knowledge of Russia's plight, the Agadir experiment would indeed have been a case of political recklessness of the most dangerous sort.

As a last resort and with the utmost reluctance France finally agreed to indemnify Germany for renouncing her political claims in Morocco. It is a well-known fact today that in the course of the proceedings, she continually attempted to bring about English interference in order to force Germany either to retreat or to declare war. At times, her influence seemed all but successful. Misleading statements alleging Germany's anti-

French, and notably anti-English intentions in Morocco stirred up public opinion in England to a high pitch of hostile expression, and more than once created an acutely dangerous attitude of the English policy. The French made especial use of the delusive allegation that the Germans planned to construct a naval station in Morocco with a view of cutting off England's wheat supply by intercepting the Argentine grain ships, which every spring come within close range of the coast of Morocco.

The strenuous and successful efforts of France to incite English public opinion against Germany did not become fully known until some time after. Certain it is that France would have to shoulder the responsibility if matters at that time had taken a warlike turn. Yet every effort to induce England to make war on Germany, if necessary without the assistance of Russia, proved absolutely futile. What the French policy did show, without the shadow of a doubt, was the unwillingness to cede to Germany the territory of New-Kamerun as an indemnity for acknowledging the sovereignty of France in Morocco.

In the course of negotiations between England and France, the question of England's military assistance on land was being discussed at some length. England, so it seemed, was asked by France to send an expeditionary force of one

hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, not by the short route, Dover-Calais, which could have easily been protected, but by way of the North Sea. It was argued that by way of Calais the English would have had to use the railroads reserved for the transport of the French troops, an arrangement which would have either resulted in disorder of the French muster or prevented the English from arriving at the battle front in time for action. On the other hand, England's assistance might prove exceedingly helpful and effective if the English forces marched through neutral Belgium and interfered with the muster of German troops in the lower Rhine valley. The second plan would have been a real danger for Germany, a greater danger, indeed, than even the landing of troops in Schleswig-Holstein, a project made famous by Bismarck's terse witticism. Bismarck, it seems, had been asked what he would do if one hundred thousand Englishmen appeared in Schleswig-Holstein, to which the Iron Chancellor replied that he would have them arrested.

But England balked. The distance between the English coast and the mouth of the Scheldt was too great. In spite of the vast numerical superiority in battleships it was manifestly not safe to undertake a transport of so large a body of troops. There were German submarines, and the German torpedo boats were known to be in a high

state of efficiency. These and perhaps still other reasons, not to forget Russia's unpreparedness, constituted sufficient grounds for England's failure to act. One other fact not hitherto mentioned may have lent its weight to preserve peace; Edward VII was no longer among the living. The royal office, its constitutional limitations notwithstanding, no longer lent its weighty judgment to the belief that in the critical moment the German emperor would decide in favor of peace, a conviction which under Edward VII had been the very foundation of England's foreign policy.

At the conclusion of the Morocco negotiations, the French waived their hitherto uncontested right to the Belgian Congo and ceded to Germany a piece of their equatorial possession which, when united with Kamerun, extended the German frontiers in two directions as far as the Belgium territory. The form in which this transaction was clothed was somewhat indistinct but good enough for practical purposes. In the light of the results obtained, the numerous attacks on the German Morocco-Congo policy, so-called, by German critics were obviously unjustified and unjust. It must be remembered that to gain South Morocco in 1911 would have been impossible, except, perhaps, as the result of a successful war. Even when Germany declared herself ready to waive all political claims on Morocco in consideration of an indemnity in tropical Africa, war was

avoided only by the breadth of a hair. The very thought of a German South Morocco was impossible for France and unbearable for suspicious England. The practical occupation of the country would have placed Germany from the very beginning before the alternative of war or retreat.

No matter what is said and done regarding Morocco, if France, with or without her allies, forces war upon Germany, Morocco will constitute part of the spoils. Yet, in 1911 to have plunged Germany into war on account of Morocco would have been a foolish if not criminal act on the part of the government. First of all, Germany lacked the consciousness of a moral right, that is to say, the conviction that her national existence was at stake; that certainty only can justify a decision in favor of such far-reaching consequence. In the second place, it would have been abject folly to declare war in the face of inadequate military preparedness. Lastly, if Morocco is ever to be a *casus belli,* it will meanwhile constantly grow in value as the result of French colonizing efforts.

The above considerations show clearly that it is wrong to interpret the Morocco-Congo exchange in terms of the possible colonial value of the newly acquired territory of New-Kamerun. I visited the country and am in the position to state that in spite of the ill-reputed swamps and the sleeping sickness it is not nearly as bad as

proclaimed by people that know nothing about it. The swamps interfere neither with the accessibility of the land nor with any chance of turning it to the best advantage; the sleeping sickness can be combated, and large tracts of land ceded by France are capable of profitable development when opened up by railroads, without which the interior of Africa is without any value. But all this is of minor importance. One fact and that only is of momentous significance — the fact that the French were forced to renounce their rights which they assumed in the Berlin-Congo conference and according to which they claimed the exclusive option on the colonial territory of Belgium if that country should ever be willing to dispose of its possessions. Besides, Germany had now become the western neighbor of a district where the danger of English competition seems out of the question.

With regard to the Congo, there need be no fear that Germany plans to annex that territory either openly or by underhand means. The Congo is Belgium's property, and every spurious assertion that Germany has designs upon it emanates from the mouth of a calumniator or a wanton prattler. Whether or not Belgium will be able to retain the Congo in the face of enormous financial sacrifices is, of course, an entirely different question. During the reign of King Leopold of Belgium, the resources of that equa-

torial region have been drained to the last penny, and the ever increasing deficit incurred causes a correspondingly growing concern to the government. Moreover, since the date of the original treaty by which King Leopold was given possession of the Congo, the Belgian nation has voiced strenuous objections against the oppressing colonial burden. So strong has been the feeling of opposition to the colonial venture that public demands were made to dispose of part of the African possessions, a symptom which certainly needs no further interpretation.

Now, let it be supposed that Germany had at no time before taken an interest in the Congo, and the question of a sale were assuming a definite form, France would most certainly put forth her claims as a customer, of course, not without having previously secured England's consent. What would be the result? Criticisms without number that the German government failed to recognize the importance of the Belgian offer and allowed a splendid chance for colonial aggrandizement to pass by unnoticed. What has been said of the Congo is equally true of Angola, which belongs to Portugal. Angola, it should be remembered, touches South West Africa on one side and the Congo south and west on the other side. Here again it may be asked, "How long will Portugal be able or willing to keep Angola?"

The Morocco conflict, during which England

had played the part of a second to France, marks the climax in a German-English tension of ten years' standing. Now, although it is apparent that England's extensive preparation to force a political crisis was aimed at the Germans, and her foreign policy at a complete isolation of Germany, it is nevertheless true that the extreme danger of war during the Morocco conflict was due to quite a different cause: England plainly mistrusted Germany's Morocco policy. Some time after normal conditions had been restored, a member of the English cabinet made the following statement, "If the German government had made it plain from the very beginning that Germany had no intentions of doing violence to France or of remaining in Morocco, the danger of the whole situation, temporary as it proved to be, could have been prevented." As a matter of fact, Germany made her wishes very plain, but when she did, England mistrusted her. Not until some time later did England allay her suspicions and establish a policy of confidence toward Germany.

A survey of the political situation which developed since the second Morocco conference and after the anti-English debates in the German Reichstag of 1911, reveals a rather sudden revulsion of feelings in England. This change, which seems all the more remarkable if it be remembered that the English had all but begun hostili-

ties, is due to a number of widely different causes. The first of these is of a particularly striking nature. Strange as it may seem, the English opinions of the former chancellor Prince Bülow and the present chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg are greatly at variance. Certain quarters mistrusted von Bülow's policy, charging erroneously that he worked to further Germany's interests at the expense of England. With the present chancellor the case is quite different, England having slowly arrived at the conclusion that von Bethmann-Hollweg's policy has a high regard for the life-interest of England, a regard which Germany would fain have reciprocated. Curiously enough, a new imperial chancellor was needed to teach England a fact which every thinking person versed in affairs of the state regards as axiomatic. England's case verifies the truism so frequently forgotten or neglected that our opponents govern their actions not so much by our real thoughts and intentions as by their faulty interpretations of them.

Another cause for England's change of attitude resulted from the introduction of the new dreadnaught type which, as intimated, reduced England's naval superiority in no small degree. When in the critical moment the political combinations, in support of which the new type of battleship had been constructed, refused to work, the dreadnaughts were no longer an advantage

to the English fighting strength. On the contrary, the successful adoption of the new type by Germany and other countries tended to diminish the disparity of strength between the English navy and that of the rest of the great naval powers. This is particularly true in the case of Germany where the building of dreadnaughts progressed faster and better than in other countries. The proportion of Germany's large line-of-battle ships to those of England is today represented by the ratio ten to sixteen, a condition which would be out of question without the dreadnaughts. In a certain sense, therefore, England's first mistake, the cession of Helgoland to Germany, was followed, fifteen years later, by another blunder, the building of dreadnaughts.

A third factor doubtless responsible for the revulsion of feeling in England has its roots in the industrial insurance laws. In that form of social amelioration Germany led the nations of the earth. There was, of course, no dearth of criticisms which busily pointed out that the insurance laws constituted a grave obstacle to Germany's successful competition with other manufacturing nations. Yet, in the course of time, the moral pressure of Germany's example proved so strong that an industrial nation like the English could scarcely expect successfully to resist an early adoption of the industrial insurance law. The new venture, naturally, entailed a great ex-

penditure of funds, which had to be drawn from the public treasury. At the same time the public burdens, levied by the constant increase of the navy, assumed such enormous proportions that the question was raised, "Which seems the more prudent course, a perpetual readiness to attack Germany, or a peaceful understanding with that country?"

In addition to the reasons cited, the conviction was rather suddenly forced on England that, contrary to the general belief, the German people were fully able to meet the financial demands of a war. Anent this contingency not only the English but also the French and even the Germans themselves entertained entirely erroneous views. It was a matter of general surprise that during the Morocco crisis as well as during the two Balkan wars Germany's financial stability was practically unaffected while all the rest of Europe suffered to no inconsiderable degree. At the same time, a number of publications exhibited to the entire world the splendid growth of Germany's national wealth within the last twenty years. The most important among the works of that type is a book by Dr. Karl Helfferich (President of the Deutsche Bank), entitled *Germany's National Wealth,* 1888-1913. There seems to be no longer any doubt that Germany's total wealth exceeds that of either England or France, and that the per capita rate is but slightly exceeded, if

at all, by the English or French figures. England's supposed ascendency over Germany thereby lost one of its mainstays on which the anti-German policy had largely depended.

A last, though perhaps not decisive, reason for England's conciliatory attitude may be found in Germany's progress along a certain line of applied military science. I am referring to her superior aerial fleet, superior by England's own confession. It is generally admitted that in a war on land or on sea victory is almost always on that side which is able to obtain the more rapid information as to strength and position of the opponent. In other words, as long as the Germans have more or better airships than the English, they possess a more efficient intelligence service before the beginning of a naval battle. A belligerent, though generally inferior to his opponent, is nevertheless able to carry off the victory if he shows superior tactics in attacking one unit of the hostile forces after the other. To that end, successful and detailed information in regard to the enemy and a careful disguise of his own movements are of the utmost importance. It is not impossible, in case of war with England, that Germany solely through the help of her large rigid airships will gain a naval victory in the North Sea, a victory which may prove more weakening to the English forces than to the German. It does not seem likely that England

will jeopardize her chances of success in the face of such a possibility.

The facts enumerated in the foregoing paragraphs did not constitute the only reasons for the change in England's foreign policy in its relation to Germany. Other questions touching intimately upon British interests did their share of the work. Among these, the march of events in the Balkan peninsula and in the Turkish Orient take foremost rank. To arrive at a correct estimate of the situation, it is necessary to start with Russia as a point of departure. The affairs of Russia, however, demand extensive and thoroughgoing considerations, which must be viewed in their entirety and are therefore reserved for another chapter. And yet it does not seem premature to note the result of the previously named motives for the change in England's attitude toward Germany, the result that a mutual understanding between the two countries rests unquestionably upon a number of necessary presuppositions, which demand sacrifices and concessions from both of the contending parties.

In arriving at the conclusion stated above, one important consideration must not be withheld. England, unlike Germany, is not interested in the lasting conservation of the Turkish empire. On the contrary, she aims at the speedy annexation of the territory between Palestine and the mouth of the Tigris to her Egyptian possession, and the

establishment of a great Anglo-Arabian caliphate. No doubt England has been cherishing that plan as a pet policy, though she has tentatively abandoned it in view of prevailing German interests. Yet there is a vast difference between Russia's desire to dismember the Turkish empire from the north, and England's Anglo-Arabian project. The Egyptian question loses its significance for England as soon as Germany makes sure of her own desire for a lasting peace which, in turn, would be possible only if her commercial expansion suffered no irreparable injuries. As soon as the English began to recognize Germany's pacific intentions, all obstacles for a permanent understanding seemed to be removed. Until then, there had always been a strong suspicion in England that the German navy was planned, in last analysis, to serve the purpose of attack. That wholly unfounded mistrust on the part of an entire nation can be explained only on psychological grounds. Heretofore, England as a nation was unable to place herself in the position of a people which, like the Germans, had experienced a vast expansion of their foreign commercial interests which it was anxious to protect with a navy of sufficient strength. "Why [so the English argued] does Germany need a navy? Is not one all powerful navy, the English navy, more than able to protect the freedom of the seas? Now, if Germany persists in building ship after

ship she has obviously no other end in view than an attack on England." So, England continued to sing Winston Churchill's tune of the German "de luxe" navy. Not until lately did it dawn upon Britain that Germany, by increasing her navy, was but following the inevitable law of economic growth, by which all great nations are forced to safeguard their foreign interests, without presuming too much upon the good will of other governments.

From the foregoing it is clear that England agreed to respect the integrity of Turkey, pending the eventual fulfillment of her wishes with regard to Arabia and the territories adjacent to the Euphrates and the Egyptian border. It will be an affair of German diplomacy to defer the point of time when the English proviso will gain a dangerously practical significance. In doing so, it seems reasonably certain that England prefers, on general principle, to set aside her own wishes if she succeeds thereby in curbing Russia's ambition of extending her domain to the Mediterranean coast. There can be no doubt that the English policy has voluntarily given some of the essential pledges of honesty and good will toward Germany, as may be imagined, not without losing sight of England's political aspirations previously pointed out. The political situation had indeed changed. During the reign of Edward VII the policy of German isolation had been pursued with

great vigor; as late as 1911, a war-pact had been the object of serious discussion between the English and French governments; and now England no longer objects to the building of the Bagdad railroad, a project which she had heretofore so strenuously opposed. The Bagdad railroad is being built, and is being built with German capital.

For a time the Germans had ceded to England the rights of constructing the section from Bagdad to the Gulf of Persia in exchange for the right of way through Syria to Alexandretta, the best harbor in that region of the Mediterranean. Lately, England relinquished the supervision also of the previously ceded section from Bagdad to the Gulf in favor of Germany. The result of this double shift is that the railroad terminal will not be located at Koweit, a small seaport within English jurisdiction, but in Bassora at the mouth of the Euphrates and Tigris, a vilayet incontestably under Turkish rule. The construction work in the harbor of Bassora and the labor required to make the last one hundred and twenty miles of the united Euphrates and Tigris (the so-called Shat-el-Arab), navigable are financed by a company with more German than English capital. North of the thirty-first latitude (about the latitude of Austin, Texas) no tracks have been laid with English money, nor English railway concessions been asked or granted.

The Russian and French negotiations with Turkey regarding railway concessions in the northeast of Asia Minor and in Syria, have resulted neither in an intersection nor in a menacing restriction of Germany's economic interests along the Bagdad road. The concessions obtained by France are of less practical value than French public opinion seems to assume, and than the official publications in the French press endeavor to make known. The Russian-French concessions between the Armenian Taurus and the Black Sea are in part, at least for the present, consigned to the draftsman's board, owing to serious topographic obstacles. Besides, provisions have been made, by way of good connections with the Bagdad railroad, to facilitate Turkey's military preparations in the event of war. That feature of the enterprise is of great importance. In the face of this situation both France and Russia can ill afford to sacrifice their prestige or trifle with public opinion. They must create the impression of success even if the facts in the case do not warrant that course. Not so Germany; her policy, unencumbered by the weighty considerations of her rivals, is prone to follow the very opposite path.

Another basic factor of the German-English entente deserves mention. Germany is now able to turn every fair and promising chance of expanding her interests in Africa to the best ad-

vantage without incurring England's protest. Such contingencies may arise if Belgium and Portugal are unable, as previously pointed out, to develop the resources of their West-African possessions and are willing to enter into agreements which will prove politically and financially of distinct benefit to them. But even though the powers concerned had in the past been willing to dispose of their territory, Germany's control of it would have been out of the question as long as England objected. From all appearance, these obstacles have now been removed. The attentive observer is nevertheless justified in assuming a certain attitude of mistrust toward England, in counselling unrelenting vigilance, and in leaning toward a critical analysis of the English concessions with a view of determining their value and their sincerity. Above all, there is lack of proof that in the event of a German-Russian war, England has no secret understanding with Russia directed against the security of the German empire. On the other hand, it does not pay to be blind to actual advantages gained, and to measure them lastingly in terms of the unattainable.

CHAPTER V

THE RUSSIAN PERIL

NO estimate of general European political activity can possibly be correct or even complete if it fails to take cognizance of Russia's renewed ambition to gain a foothold on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, a policy which she energetically resumed after the treaty with Japan in 1905. Russia's objective point is either the Dardanelles or the southern coast of Asia Minor. After the Anglo-Russian treaty in 1907, a person of high rank said that henceforth a permanent Russian action in the direction of the Gulf of Iskanderun may be expected.

This statement which has previously been quoted in a different connection is equally applicable to present-day conditions. Russia's action, however, received a strong check in consequence of the war with Japan, which seriously impaired the efficiency of her army. Similarly the internal upheavals of 1905 interfered in no small degree with the execution of her political program as above outlined. Even as late as 1908 and 1909, that is, after the Anglo-Russian and Franco-Russian meetings at Reval, and later during the Servo-Bosnian crisis, Russia was not

yet in the position to back her demands with her armed forces, and was subsequently compelled to withdraw her demands when she saw that Germany was determined to support Austria-Hungary.

As soon as Russia had made sure that her plans in the Orient would be crossed by the joint action of Germany and Austria-Hungary, she at once set to work to remove the obstacle. Her efforts in that direction date back to the time of the Russian-Japanese treaty of peace (summer of 1905 at Portsmouth, N. H.), and Austria's annexation of Bosnia, when she attempted to loosen the ties of the Triple Alliance by means of certain promises to Italy. If it were possible — so she argued — to instigate dissension between Austria-Hungary and Italy, Russia's chances in a war with Austria would be greatly enhanced. Moreover, it was then possible for Russia to reach her goal at the Mediterranean without a struggle for life or death. It will be recalled that in 1909 a clash of Austrian and Italian interests in the western part of the Balkan peninsula was imminent. At that time, and immediately preceding, Russia's intimacy with Italy had passingly entered upon a very dangerous stage.

When in 1909 it had become evident that Russia's policy had failed, she forthwith launched a new project, viz., the unification of the little Balkan states, a coup by which she hoped to tie up

Austria's military forces. It has become known since then that the alliance of Bulgaria, Servia, Montenegro, and Greece was originally not directed against Turkey but against Austria-Hungary, and, what is more, that Russia had been sponsor to the union. That the storm first broke over Turkey is an extraneous matter; in the end Russia had no objections against that turn of events, provided that the Balkan alliance proved lasting, that she retained her place as its patron and that, even after it had increased at Turkey's expense, it could be used as an effective weapon against Austria.

In the beginning, all prospects for success seemed bright. Quite unexpectedly, however, Russia's hopes came to naught when, immediately after the victory over Turkey, a war broke out among the allies as the result of Bulgaria's excessive demands. Henceforth an irreparable breach seemed to separate the Slavic nations of the Balkan peninsula. Russia did all in her power to prevent the subsequent internal war in the Balkans, but her efforts proved in vain. By this change of events the general Balkan confederation against Austria lost its significance for some time to come.

As a substitute Russia now employed every known artifice to win Roumania to her side. In a war against Austria, Servia's assistance was reasonably assured, and if Roumania, too, could

be won to the cause, Russia would attain practically the same end that had prompted her to call the Balkan alliance into existence, viz., to tie up an important unit of the Austro-Hungarian army in the south. Roumania, no doubt, would make large political demands, nothing less, perhaps, than the cession of the greater part of Bessarabia, a country with over a million of Roumanian inhabitants. Until 1878 that tract of land had belonged to Roumania. At the Congress of Berlin, however, Russia forced Roumania to cede Bessarabia in exchange for the valueless province of Dobrudja—presumably in recognition of Roumania's invaluable assistance in the war against Turkey.

Russia's territorial ambition to gain the Mediterranean was exposed in all its rudeness when, in January, 1913, she attempted to send an army into Turkish Armenia, hoping thereby to force the terms of peace of the allied Balkans upon the Sultan. As a matter of fact Russia cared far less for Turkey's submission than for the long coveted opportunity to obtain a foothold in Asiatic Turkey. Now, if the occupation by Russia of the Armenian territory had been carried out, the disintegration of the Turkish empire would have been merely a question of time. It was for that particular reason that Germany protested against Russia's impending action. Armenia's geographical location and physical

contours are of such a character that Turkey's political and military existence is at an end if she loses Armenia, and irretrievably at an end if she loses it to Russia.

Armenia gives to its owner an immediate and absolute control of eastern Asia Minor and upper Mesopotamia. The country is plainly a thoroughfare, being crossed from east to west by two large natural highways. The more northern roads lead from Persia across the Iranian-Armenian frontier mountains over Bayazid and Karakilissa to Erzerum, a fortified town and the key to Asia Minor; thence through the valley of the western Euphrates to Erzingan, a town in Asiatic Turkey. Erzingan is the practical approach to the Anatolian highlands. The second road leads from the basin of Lake Van, which communicates by a number of passes with the Iranian highlands, through the valley of the eastern Euphrates over Mush-Palu to Charput and Malatia. The two last named towns control the approach to central and southern Anatolia as Erzerum and Erzingan control the northern entrance. Still more dominating is the location of Armenia in the south toward Mesopotamia. From the canyon of Bitlis a road leads into the Tigris valley and from there down the river as far as Mosul. A second road communicates from Charput, through the pass of Arghana-Maden in the Taurus, with Djarbekir, which, in

its turn, controls both the southeastern route over Mardin and Nesibin to Mosul, and the southwestern route over Severek and Urfa to Aleppo and the central Euphrates channel.

If the Russians were to take possession of Armenia, they would build without delay a railroad from Kars over Erzerum to Erzingan, and a second railroad from Erivan along the west shore of Lake Van to Bitlis, possibly with a branch line to Charput and Malatia. From that moment, Russia controls the highways to Anatolia and Mesopotamia, without any danger of being attacked in the natural stronghold which is formed by the Armenian highlands. No army could possibly enter Armenia from the south or west, without first breaking through the gateways before named. On the other hand, a flanking movement into the rear of the Russian position is excluded owing to the inaccessible highlands of the Taurus and the Black Sea mountain ranges. But while the Russian positions in Armenia are unassailable, the Russians, in their turn, can debouch at the first favorable moment.

To offset Russia's military advantages at her western and southern gates by adequate defensive positions, is out of the question for Turkey when robbed of Armenia, not to speak of an offensive against that country, strengthened, as it will be, by forts and railroads. Let us suppose that nothing were left of the Turkish empire but the Ana-

tolian peninsula, and that Mesopotamia, as far as the foot of the Taurus, were English, two most undesirable conditions, which it is hoped will never be realized, it would then be difficult to conceive of a more severe menace to both Turkish and English interests than the strategic position of Russia. All of anterior Asia, from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea, would be like an enormous glacis commanded by Russia's military power.

The unification of Armenia, Transcaucasia, and northern Persia by the hand of Russia are a menace to the entire western Asia, formidable beyond the power of comprehension. If, therefore, the Turkish empire is to be preserved, Armenia must necessarily remain a part of it. Any attempt by Russia to annex that territory must be resisted by Germany, as long as it is possible for Germany to support the Ottoman empire.

In the light of these facts, it is plain why Germany notified Russia that the peace of Europe was endangered if she carried out the invasion of Armenia, which she had planned early in 1913. This was, in a certain sense, a repetition of the events of 1909, in which year Germany informed Russia that certain moves of the Russian policy would be resisted with the full strength of Germany's armed forces. The success in both cases was similar. Russia did not yet seem in the position to match her military power with that

of Germany and Austria combined, particularly in view of the weakened state of the Balkan alliance, a condition which was caused by the war against Turkey.

Russia yielded, though hardly with kindly sentiments toward Germany. On the contrary, from the political defeat which Russia had suffered she reasoned that far more comprehensive preparations were required to break Germany's and Austria's opposition to her projects. It seems that a far reaching demand had been made of the French ally, nothing less than the re-establishment of the three years' military service. By increasing her army to a peace establishment of eight hundred thousand men or more it was hoped that, in case of war with Germany, France would be able to display her superiority in the early and supposedly decisive battles, even before the mobilization of the countries involved had been completed. For the assumption that the idea of the three years' service did not have its inception with the French, but originated with Russia, Theodor Schiemann advanced a number of noteworthy proofs. Accordingly, Russia clothed her wish in the form of a threat to the effect that she would abrogate her alliance unless France was willing to yield. Corresponding to the military reorganization in France, Russia strengthened and extended her strategic railroads in the west, improved her army equipment, and

increased her preparedness in the event of a mobilization against Germany. France lent a willing hand to Russia's plans by granting her the enormous loan of five hundred million dollars, payable within a period of five years.

Such were the events that led to Germany's recent army increase and to the establishment of an exceedingly high military tax. Both army increase and military taxation could have been avoided if Germany had been willing to sacrifice her interests in Turkey; that is, Armenia, and with Armenia all of eastern Asia Minor as far as the Mediterranean. In that event the Turkish-Asiatic Orient would have presented the following appearance: Turkey would have shrunk to an insignificant territory on both sides of the straits (*i. e.,* the Hellespont, Sea of Marmora and Bosporus), with its Asiatic borders in the neighborhood of Eregly or Sinope, Angora and Smyrna; Russia's possessions would have extended as a broad mass through Armenia, Kurdistan, and all of eastern Anatolia as far as Cilicia and the Gulf of Iskanderun, opposite the island of Cyprus.

Against such overwhelming odds the little remnant of the Turkish empire in the west would have been deprived of all resistance, either military or political. Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Arabia, and Syria would have been cut off from the balance of Turkish territory and annexed by

England, possibly with the exception of central Syria, which, by way of compromise, would have been ceded to France. The Anglo-Arabian Caliphate with Cairo, Jerusalem, and Mecca under English rule would thus have been realized. If Germany and Italy did set any value on it, they would perhaps have secured an insignificant share in Asia Minor. Be that as it may, the collapse of the Turkish empire and the distribution of its territory among the great powers to the exclusion of Germany, obviously robs Germany's oriental policy of a successful future.

Under the present state of affairs in Europe, there seems to be no practical mediation calculated to reconcile Russia's desire of expanding her domain as far as the Cilician coast at the Mediterranean, and the German life-interest to preserve lastingly in point of space and time, the integrity of the Turkish empire. It should be noted in this connection that Alexandretta, which is Russia's objective point at the coast, is at the same time the maritime starting point of the Bagdad railroad and of the Cilician cotton district. If Russia persists in disturbing the peace of Europe on every occasion that seems to serve her political aspirations, it is difficult to see how a friendly solution of the Oriental question can be reached.

Russia's political tendencies, when still in the stage of the Balkan alliance, necessarily aroused

England's suspicion and, as time went on, her growing active resistance. A quick sense for discriminating and weighing the significance of future events has always been a characteristic mark of the English foreign policy. For this assertion there is no better proof than the occupation of Cyprus in the year 1878. According to the terms of the Berlin congress, England guaranteed the integrity of Asiatic Turkey to the full extent of its territorial status of that time, and demanded, by way of compensation, the administrative control of Cyprus — not its political ownership, which she acquired later. The geographical location of Cyprus makes that island an efficient safeguard for the Cilician coast against a Russian invasion through Armenia, a contingency most unwelcome to England's Egyptian and Mediterranean interests.

Even though the Russian fleet is not likely to attain a state of perfection that would make it a serious match for the British Mediterranean fleet, it is nevertheless possible that Russia's dominion over the wide expanse between Mt. Ararat and the eastern coast of the Mediterranean will lead to the establishment of a number of strategic routes on land and water which would endanger the security of England's possessions in Northeast Africa and the Orient. The immediate result of Russia's Mediterranean policy was an unexpected German-English com-

munity of interests supported by the facts previously cited, which had been conducive, in their turn, to a more amiable relation between England and Germany.

If Russia had succeeded, after the Balkan alliance had been formed under her guidance and authority, and the Turks defeated, in producing among the Balkan states a balance of power such as would make Russia's permanent political support desirable, she would have indirectly secured a foothold at the Aegean Sea and thereby also at the Mediterranean. According to the original plans, the Turkish-Bulgarian boundary would have been laid in the immediate neighborhood of Constantinople and the Dardanelles and Bulgaria herself would have secured an extended strip of land along the coast and thus been made a Mediterranean power.

If these plans had been carried out it would have been more than likely that, in a critical moment, the blockade of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles would have been raised, to the incalculable advantage of Russia. Nothing could have been more undesirable for England; not that the situation portended immediate danger, but for the possibilities and complications which might arise from the new territorial constellation. It was but natural, therefore, that, as Russia's pressure to remove the great obstacle which separated her from the Turkish straits grew in-

creasingly conspicuous, England's attitude toward Russia's friendship became more and more reserved, and her standpoint toward the conservation of the Turkish empire more similar to that of Germany.

When the general European situation of today is compared with that of 1908-1909, it at once becomes evident that thoroughgoing changes have taken place. The main problem for Europe and, above all, for Germany is no longer England-Germany, but Russia-Germany. England discontinued her policy of isolation; whether she did so permanently, or for the present only, is an open question. The reasons for England's revulsion of feeling have been discussed at some length. They were the death of Edward VII, the respect for the German navy, a reestablished confidence in the sincerity of Germany's foreign policy, the increase of financial burdens due to the necessity of keeping pace with Germany's military and naval activity and to the new industrial legislation, and latterly the recognition that Germany is financially far more efficient than had been heretofore assumed. England's uneasiness with regard to the re-awakened Russian activity in the Orient may be added as a last reason. It is Russia's foreign policy at the present time that furnishes the key for a comprehensive understanding of the general European situation.

In the year 1905 Russia issued from the Japanese war with a fleet reduced to insignificance, a weakened and disrupted army, and a distressing state of finance. During the first few years after the war, the country was utterly incapable of undertaking military actions, a defect which was revealed in the course of the Bosnian crisis by her futile attempts to intimidate Germany and Austria-Hungary. The expenses incurred by the unfortunate war amounted to about one billion, two hundred and fifty million dollars exclusive of the stupendous losses of ships and war material of every kind. Even before the war, Russia's finances had been anything but sound, while, at the same time, the excess of exports over imports during the last ten years showed an unfavorable average, one totally inadequate to meet her foreign obligations.

According to an authoritative report less than half of the gold, an amount of from two billion, five hundred million to three billion, seven hundred and fifty million dollars, which since the beginning of the new financial administration of Russia under Wyschnegradski and Witte had been drawn into the country, was left there at the outbreak of the war. The Russian legal tender could be maintained only by continuous loans. In 1908 a general collapse seemed imminent, so that the government was seriously considering the advisability of declaring a mora-

torium. These facts were brought to the notice of the general public by the works of political writers, more recently through a secret memorandum of the ministry of finance of 1913 to the members of the imperial council, a document which enlarges upon the condition of the imperial Russian treasury and particularly upon the dangerous consequences of the unfavorable balance mentioned above. Although this report has at no time been published, certain details of its contents have become known. It is not difficult to see that, under the prevailing conditions, Russia's bluff, which in the spring of 1909 she attempted to work on Austria-Hungary and Germany, was bound to be thwarted.

In 1909, events took an unexpected turn. Russia had gathered in a bumper crop practically without a parallel in the history of the country. Within the next three years two similar crops followed. As a result, the excess of exports over imports equaled or surpassed Russia's annual foreign debt payable in gold, an amount which is estimated at from two hundred to two hundred and twenty-five million dollars. The excess of exports over imports between 1909 and 1912 averaged about two hundred and thirty-two and a half million dollars annually; that of the preceding twenty years, only about one hundred and twelve and a half million dollars; while the figure of 1913 dropped to something over

one hundred million dollars. The excess of 1914 will again depend upon the size of the crop, though the tentative balance of trading operations is not very promising.

Obviously the decisions of Russia's foreign policy are, at least for the present, again under the pressure of unfavorable financial conditions, which, in the normal course of affairs, cannot be remedied. During the four previous years, however — that is, from 1909 to 1912 — the unusually favorable crops had stimulated Russia's political activity to an extraordinary degree.

One of the first symptoms of Russia's reawakened political ambition was the resumption of her oriental policy. The Russian-English agreement of 1907 had already directed Russia's political course toward her old aims in Turkey. The foreign policy in the Far East had to be abandoned; the long cherished plan to change Persia entirely into a tributary state of Russia, and to construct a railroad to the Persian Gulf or the Indian Ocean, was relinquished in favor of England. Instead, Russia and England entered into an agreement, which bade fair to bring about a speedy dismemberment of the Turkish empire and thereby an indemnity for the Russian losses sustained in the Far East.

The new tendency of Russia's oriental policy received its momentum from a number of powerful incentives. First of all, there was need of

recovering military prestige. Secondly, a general revulsion of feeling, both in political circles and with the people at large, demanded a return from the chimeras in the Far East to the practical aggressive policy against Turkey — the so-called "legacy of Peter the Great." A third incentive was furnished by the internal struggles between the reactionary and the liberal parties, a conflict which was constantly growing more violent. Influential circles inside and outside of the pales of the government expressed their regret that the constitution of October, 1905, had been granted in response to the intimidating pressure of the revolutionists. The "true Russians," so self-styled, attempted with increasing zeal to revise and limit the forced concessions of the crown, but the greater the political reaction, the more violent grew the opposition, not less in the ranks of the moderate conservatives than in those of the radicals.

The most efficient expedient to quell the internal dissensions was the kindling of nationalistic passions and prejudices, not only against foreign countries but also against the so-called aliens within the empire. Success was not long wanting. Both the majority of the cultured classes, and the great masses, in so far as they are open to an understanding of political affairs, have united upon the great Panslavic doctrine.

At the present time, the Russian government

as well as public opinion exert a stupendous pressure against the Orient. One subject of discussion, above all others, occupies the Russian press, the speakers at Panslavic and similar political gatherings, and even the official military organs — the subject of the Orient. In Constantinople, at the Turkish straits, in Asia Minor, there, so they say, lie the goals of Russia's political future; to attain them is Russia's historical and national mission. Much Russian gold has been expended, much Russian blood has been spilled for the Slavs in the Balkans, so that Russia has indeed a right to their leadership. But for still another reason Russia must be their chosen head; for, once in possession of the Turkish straits, it is her duty to protect them. Austria's and Germany's oriental policies form an obstacle which she must overcome. Austria is an enemy eager to subject the Balkan Slavs for her own purpose; Germany is her ally and accomplice. Moreover, Germany is filled on her own account with a "longing for the East." But her presence in the East is not desired, and yet she seeks to rob Russia of her legitimate inheritance.

Today, it is hatred against Germany that Russia nurses, hatred, downright and unequivocal, a hatred which is no longer limited to isolated circles but is shared by the entire Russian population. This hostile feeling is still deeper rooted with those that are conscious of the polit-

ical humiliation which, in 1909 and 1913, Russia suffered at the hands of Germany. Since 1909, an almost feverish zeal has been displayed in the re-organization of the army, not only for the purpose of general defense, but also more especially for the final and decisive struggle for the Turkish Orient.

At the same time, Russia was enabled, through the unusually large crops, to evoke the belief that her finances had again been placed on a firm foundation, while her supply of gold from abroad was secretly maintained by means of municipal loans, investments in industrial enterprises, and by a number of similar ventures. Only the imperial government refrained from floating a loan in order to create the impression that it was henceforth above such measures of overt weakness. But in 1913 Russia was dealt a double blow — her foreign trade obligations collapsed, and her armies, ready to invade Turkish Armenia, were compelled to withdraw from the Armenian frontier.

The Russian government now recognizes that it will not be possible to defer the final issue for any great length of time. Accordingly, when Russia proposed to her ally France to increase her preparedness for war by introducing the three years' military service, and to grant to the Russian government a credit of six hundred and twenty-five million dollars for war-like prepara-

tion in Russia, Germany met the situation by introducing the recent army bill and the military taxes. The Russian minister of finance at first tried to conceal the real purpose of the loan (financial stringency and military preparations), and attempted to explain it by an extensive plan of pioneering activity, such as the building of railroads and the construction of irrigation canals in Asiatic Russia.

But before he had half suceeded, the whole truth of the matter was revealed. Extensive railway constructions in the direction of the German frontier, fortifications, siege artillery, preparations of every type to facilitate mobilization, and a vastly increased peace establishment of the army proved to be the actual needs. According to the most recent appropriation granted by the Duma, Russia's military strength on a peace basis will, until 1916, amount to one million eight hundred thousand men, a number which during the winter months will be increased to two million two hundred thousand men. It seems only natural that in introducing these measures, a country like Russia would lose every chance for a well-regulated financial administration.

The present population of Russia is estimated at about one hundred and seventy million inhabitants; Germany has almost seventy million. Russia with a population of two and one-half

times that of Germany maintains an army which on a peace basis is more than two and one-half times as large as the German army, and this in spite of the enormous difference in the economic efficiency of the two nations. In 1912, Germany's total foreign trade amounted to more than five billion two hundred and fifty million dollars; Russia's, to about one billion six hundred million dollars; or, in other words, to less than one-third of the German figure. The per capita taxability of the Russian population amounts to only a fraction of that of the German population. Obviously this enormous military burden cannot be carried for any great length of time, and can be explained only on the assumption that Russia is eager to force the decisive issue in the near future.

Russia's national debt, which before the war with Japan had amounted to six billion rubles, has now increased to about ten billion rubles, including the French loan, which is payable in several annual instalments. This obligation cannot be lastingly met by a balance of trade, no matter how favorable. Russia is well aware of that fact, and the minister of finance has freely admitted it in his memorandum to the imperial council. Naturally, all is well as long as there is foreign credit; but since the succession of good crops seems at an end, foreign bankers have again their misgivings about Russia's finances.

England has always been maintaining an attitude of reserve toward Russia's desires to obtain loans. The Germans begin to recognize, unfortunately too late, that all loans to Russia serve no other purpose but military preparations against Germany.

There is scarcely any other country in the world that is willing to finance Russia's next war, except France. The French have, by their own confession, granted Russia public and private loans amounting to almost four billion dollars. They have thereby tied their fate to that of Russia, and, it should be added, they did so willingly, as Russia is their one hope for their long-cherished spirit of revenge. They believed that they could outfinance Germany's military preparations, and found that, also in that respect, Germany was more than their match. They adopted the three years' conscription knowing full well that the new burden could not be borne for a great length of time.

Russia must choose either to declare war while her immense gold reserve is still untouched, and the world at large still recognizes her solvency, or to decide between disarmament and national bankruptcy. France must choose either to declare war while she is still able to bear the burden of the three years' service, or to give up her hope for revenge which she so fondly nursed for more than forty years. If both Russia and France

are victorious, they are sure that the vanquished opponent will pay the expenses. If Russia is conquered, she will have another lost war on her record — but she is rid of her debts, as her first official act, after peace has been restored, will be to declare national bankruptcy. But the fear of that contingency cannot affect a government like that of Russia.

It is readily admitted that unexpected developments may in the eleventh hour alter the entire situation. Russia's internal politics are in a dangerous state of fermentation, so much so that well-informed persons believe the Russian revolution has not yet taken place but is near at hand. If that is so, it may be argued, with excellent reason, that the authorities in Russia would prefer to stake their chances for a great outward success on the fortunes of war before they exposed themselves to the impending revolution. In France, no less than in Russia, there are such as counsel moderation, but their influence is next to nothing. After all, what is left for France to do if the Russians give her the choice either to try jointly with them the fortunes of war, or to lose part, if not all, of her Russian investments?

Competent judges in Germany point to 1915 as the year in which Russia's military preparedness will have attained a moderately high degree of perfection. It can, of course, not be expected

that until then all desirable strategic railroads on her western boundary will be completed. Nevertheless, certain important prerequisites for mobilization and readiness for battle may until 1915 be adequately fulfilled. Preparedness for war is obviously a relative concept. No nation is ever fully prepared, as its opponent is likewise at work, and his progress continually demands new measures to counteract whatever advantages may have been gained on the hostile side.

This race for supremacy also characterizes Germany and Russia. The Russian strategic railways which had been planned, supposedly by special request of the French general staff, would require several years for their completion. Similarly, the Russian army would reach its highest numerical development, as provided by the recent recruiting laws, not until 1916. And yet, if the political situation would warrant the fatal step, it is not impossible that Russia may resolve to force the decision of the sword some time during the year 1915 or even earlier.

There seems to be no doubt that the recent "disclosures" of the defects in the French army, even though they may have been intentionally emphasized, and, for purposes of internal politics, been given prominence, have put a damper on public opinion in France and in Russia. While this fact is not without value for the preservation of peace, it will not prove an obstacle to

France such as was encountered a few years ago, when it was discovered that the powder intended for the navy was utterly useless. In fact, nothing will decide the question of peace and war but the demands of either the Russian-French interests or those of Russia's leading political faction. Neither Russia nor France will, in that case, be influenced by the somewhat incomplete state of military preparedness. Again, I should like to emphasize the fact that, above all, the critical condition of Russia's finances is the one great source of danger. To restore them to a normal basis by peaceful means seems well-nigh impossible unless Russia decided forthwith to abandon her policy of armament and to apply all her powers to necessary reforms within her borders. The possibility of national bankruptcy is the most dangerous encouragement for a war-like gamble, as both victory and defeat open an equal prospect to shake off the entire burden of the stupendous national debt. And yet the impending bankruptcy cannot be averted except perhaps by another series of bumper crops or by an indefinitely continued renewal of French loans. The irresistible power of Russia's traditions to conquer and expand, the hatred against Germany and Austria — a hatred unequaled in its venomousness, and a powerful national will to dominate the Orient, have jointly created a situation whose gravity can scarcely be overestimated. As

a matter of fact, the peace of Europe is more endangered today than it has been for some time in the past. In view of these unfortunate facts, nothing seems more natural or necessary for Germany than to strain her every fiber in preparing for the defense of the country.

CHAPTER VI

THE SALIENT IDEAS OF GERMANY'S FOREIGN POLICY

THERE is, at the present time, scarcely a task more difficult than the pursuit of German politics. World economics have led the Germans inevitably into world politics without permitting them to decide whether or not they would be willing to undertake the new tasks which must necessarily arise. Other great nations with older claims in world politics most naturally look upon Germany's rise as an infringement upon their own interests. It is instructive to compare their presumable development with that of Germany.

Half a century ago, Russia had about as many inhabitants as Germany has today, that is, close to seventy million. Since then the Russian population about doubled, being now estimated at one hundred and seventy million, more or less. Russia's rate of increase is very high, considerably higher than that of Germany, and it will grow still more when the progress in public sanitary regulations reduces the rate of mortality. In twenty years from now, the population of Russia

will presumably have reached the two hundred million mark. No doubt, her political, economic, and cultural conditions are unstable, and are likely, within the near future, to assume a still more critical character. While the general efficiency of the country may thereby receive a temporary though severe check, the numerical growth of the nation will proceed uninterruptedly.

In the course of time, the forces inherent in Russia's national life are sure to develop, even though they may first have to overcome countless difficulties. On a given area, Russia's agriculture yields at the present time only one-fourth that of Germany. That rate is certain to grow, and, although Russia's farming industry may never reach more than half of Germany's productivity, her available farm lands are capable of supporting double the present population of the country. Additional possibilities are offered by the colonization of Siberia and Turkestan. It is safe to suppose that in the second half of the twentieth century, Russia will have grown to an empire of three hundred million inhabitants.

England's future is of a different kind, though not less promising. Perhaps, within the next few decades, that country will girdle the earth as a gigantic federal empire consisting of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and the British Isles, with a direct control over the African and Asiatic colonies inhabited by non-European races.

Of the first three named, Canada will, no doubt, experience the fastest increase in population. Regarding Australia, it was formerly believed that, owing to its arid quality, it would always be but sparsely populated. However, the great strides of modern agricultural methods in rainless tracts open up a far more favorable future for the Australian continent than has hitherto been thought possible. Besides, the islands of New Zealand, which have great climatic advantages, can alone maintain twenty million people. True it is that the Dutch Africans in South Africa freed themselves surprisingly fast from English influence; and yet, the more independent the former Boers grow in the administration of their internal affairs, the more readily will they declare themselves willing to be and to remain a powerful member of the great English world empire.

The United States of America may experience an economic and political future far more wonderful than the human mind is able to picture, particularly so if the Americans will continue to foster a still higher type of national consciousness and provide for an adequate federal army. Perhaps future conditions will train them to these needs. But, in either case, they are a world power whose weight is bound to influence the march of human events.

To the number of progressive world powers

must be added the French, who, in the face of elemental difficulties, stake their all on maintaining a place in world politics, and the Italians, with their growing demands in international affairs. Russia, England, and the United States have every possibility, here or across the ocean, of territorial expansion; Germany is not so fortunately situated. The words of the poet, "Where wert thou when the world was parceled out?" have assumed a most serious meaning for Germany. As yet it is Germany's good fortune that it is not only quantity but also quality which makes for a nation's power; but there is a definite limit in world politics beyond which number cannot be outweighed by quality.

Other nations are in the position of building their national and politico-economic existence on an external foundation of boundless dimensions; Germany has nothing but its firmly bounded European base, on which she is forced to build her national and industrial life, tower-like, higher and higher. But trees and towers do not grow into the heavens. If, therefore, Germany is eager to maintain its place among world powers, she must necessarily, in one way or the other, seek to enlarge the foundations of her national existence.

A certain publication entitled *German World Policies and No War,* a paper which, though frequently quoted, cannot be too emphatically

rejected, denies the aims of a German world policy proper. And yet the writer cannot escape impressing his readers with the necessity that at least an apparent aim of world policies would have to be set up. The author of this pamphlet has been charged, rightly or wrongly, with having yielded to influences from above. Be that as it may, his views have aroused the majority of German political economists, men in independent positions, to an open opposition to any policy tending to reduce Germany's foreign aims.

Recently, another publication appeared, which, from its more forcible and optimistic tone, may be characterized as the very opposite of the aforenamed pamphlet. There are convincing reasons that this second work originated within the circle of professional political economists, more especially of those that confine their studies to Germany's foreign policy. I am referring to the book entitled *Essentials of Present-day World Politics,* which appeared under the pseudonym "Ruedorffer." Starting out from the Bismarckean policies at the time of what is known as the saturation of Germany, this Mr. Ruedorffer enlarges in a most excellent manner on the two motor-principles of Germany's political activity, viz., *concentration* and *expansion.*

Ruedorffer says:

> Bismarck looked upon the consolidation of Germany's newly acquired unity as the first and prin-

cipal task after the fortunate war with France. To divert the attention of France from the Rhine border, he favored, as much as he could, French expansion in Africa and Asia. When, toward the end of his career, he attempted to secure, for a future colonial activity of Germany, a few African tracts which had not yet been claimed by any other power, he was extremely careful not to encroach upon England's interests. He avoided pushing Germany's claims beyond South West Africa and annexing the hinterland of the Cape Colony, a territory today known as Rhodesia.

Bismarck kept Germany's world policies within the limits which, according to his opinion, were prescribed by her continental policies. He placed the continental policy in every detail above the world policy, and granted to the first no more than the interest of the second permitted.

But the new German empire grew beyond its narrow confines. The population has an annual increase of from eight hundred thousand to nine hundred thousand inhabitants. For these new masses, food or its equivalent, work, must be found. To support the steadily increasing population, German products must find additional foreign markets. More and more products of German industry must find their way across the German borders. The stupendous economic rise which followed the consolidation of the country is well known everywhere.

Thanks to the enduring industry of the German people, their efficiency, their scientific training, and their unusual creative force, the country succeeded in exporting the products of manufacture, rather than human material. Germany's economic activity, with its results and its interests, encompasses the whole world. Some of its branches have conquered the highest place, all of them a second or third rank. These economic successes were naturally followed by political interests. The marvelous

power of productivity which characterizes this aspiring people forces the new empire into the pursuance of world policies. . . .

The development of economic interests and the subsequent need of world policies on the one side, and the continental limitations of the German empire on the other, have created the peculiar political status of modern Germany. Germany is closed in on all sides by civilized countries with old political traditions. Colonial expansion along her borders is excluded. The country occupies the very center of a group of world powers. No other country is similarly located. All of its neighbors have a territory of possible expansion, so to speak, at their very gates. Russia has Asia, Austria-Hungary has the Balkans, France and Italy have the northern coast of France, sea-encircled Albion has the great wide world. All these countries have practically only one border to defend, while the others are free from possible attacks.

Germany constituting the very core of Europe is more dependent on the general political constellation of the continent than any one of her neighbors. It is difficult for her to protect herself against hostile alliances, and, to do so successfully, she is constantly forced to go to considerable expenses for diplomatic or military purposes. Bismarck was keenly conscious of this peculiar state of affairs and it was for that reason that he subordinated to his policy, which was essentially a continental policy, what he thought were the lesser needs of a world policy.

In every enterprise, whether on African, Turkish, Persian, or Chinese soil, Germany's policy will necessarily have to take account of the presumable reaction on the European political constellation. If Germany encounters Russian interests in Turkey, in Persia, or in China, she will thereby bind Russia still more closely to immutable France; if she infringes upon England's interests in Mesopotamia,

she will see England on the side of her opponents. As a matter of fact, Germany's early ventures in her world policy had exactly those effects. The German policy in the Orient, which was ushered in by the Bagdad railroad plan, showed to Russia and France a common potential opponent and contributed greatly to their mutual understanding. For that very reason, German diplomats of the continental turn of mind considered this enterprise a tactical mistake of the German policy.

Ruedorffer establishes the fact that the first departure from Bismarckean tradition must be interpreted as a practical recognition that Germany's development can no longer afford to yield offhand to foreign pressure, when the acquisition of promising over-sea territories is at stake. That this sudden change of policy, which occurred in 1904, on the occasion of the French colonial venture in Morocco, involved a number of side issues and secondary considerations, concerning which there can as yet be no unbiased historical judgment, cannot detract from the significance of Ruedorffer's contention.

From the foregoing it must, of course, not be inferred that in 1904 Germany had planned to appropriate all or part of Morocco. The crisis of 1904 does, indeed, teach the one fact that the new interests of the empire began to quarrel with the older traditions of Germany's continental policy. The underlying motive of the new policy is, of course, the expressed or unexpressed desire

for compensation. There is no need of depriving a rival nation of a much coveted object; on the other hand, it has become a principle for the political conduct of any nation to acquiesce in the growth of over-sea power of a rival only if such nation acquires corresponding interests which remove all danger of supremacy.

Nothing is more instructive than a study of the difficulties encountered by Germany in the pursuance of her Morocco policy from the Algeciras conference in 1906 to the Morocco-Congo treaty with France in 1911. France consciously aimed at rendering the Congo acts null and void, by slowly undermining the independence of Morocco. In Ruedorffer's words:

> On the basis of the international conference in 1906, Germany had certainly every cause to adopt rigorous measures against the French action in Morocco, but every attempt in that direction was halted by a hostile grouping of world powers, under whose protection France felt perfectly secure. Each additional attempt by Germany helped to knit that group into a stronger union. The Morocco question not only lent strength to King Edward's so-called policy of isolation but, at the same time, furnished a means to test its efficacy.
>
> The pettiness of the individual French offences against the Algeciras acts made it impossible for Germany to appeal to the decision of the sword. In this way Germany's policy was paralyzed by a European constellation which drew its very strength from the Morocco question and exerted an influence on other matters of vital importance for Germany. *This reciprocal dependence of world policies and*

continental policies constitutes, if you please, a circulus vitiosus, the vicious circle of Germany's foreign policy. German enterprises abroad react on the continental policy, and it is under pressure from the continental policy that Germany's world policies find their limitations.

The question naturally arises: Are the Germans content with a mere statement of these discordant difficulties? Are they satisfied to veer aimlessly between world policies and continental policies? In accordance with the demands of the growing interests of Germany's political existence, the answer must be emphatically in the negative. In this connection we are reminded of an old maxim, *Navigare necesse est, vivere non est necesse*—navigation is necessary, living is not; or, as Ruedorffer puts it:

There is no escape from the pursuance of world policies. The economic expansion and the enormous vital force of the nation demand release from its narrow confines. The policy of Germany must break the vicious circle. That task is the salient problem of Germany's foreign policy, and, whatever measures may be put forth, must be interpreted as an attempt to bring about its solution. It is obvious that Germany's latitude of action in her foreign enterprises will be the greater the more independent of the constellation of powers the empire is growing. For this reason it will be one of her first and foremost acts to free herself from the *cauchemar des coalitions*, the nightmare of hostile alliances, that seems to have tormented Bismarck.

It is therefore the first requirement of a German world policy to build up the strength of the country

to such a degree that, no matter how strong the hostile coalition, the chances for victory would be on the German side. Only then will Germany be able effectually to offset the reactions of her enterprises abroad on the European constellations. In fact, there will be no reactions when it becomes known that on the continent she is not assailable, with any hope of success, by a hostile alliance of world powers.

The future of Germany's world policy will be decided on the continent. German public opinion has not yet fully comprehended the interdependence of Germany's military place in Europe and her freedom of action in her foreign enterprises. Accordingly, the navy is generally looked upon as the most important instrument of a world policy, and, since the political aspiration of the Germans are directed upon the world at large, the navy is today a more popular institution than the army.

No doubt, this last statement of Ruedorffer is fully justified, but it is not less true that Germany without an adequate naval program would have never succeeded in forcing England into her present attitude. That an understanding within certain limits with England ought to be one of the loftiest aims of Germany's policy, is readily admitted; and yet it is of vital importance for Germany to possess a navy which is strong enough, even at the expense of defeat, to endanger England's supremacy on the seas. Without that deterrent, England will be tempted again and again to substitute for the state of mutual consideration a demand for compliance to English needs and desiderata.

In the preceding chapter it has been shown that the French spirit of revenge and the failure of Russia's oriental policy, which was due to Germany's interference in the Turkish affairs, resulted in constantly increasing military and financial efforts of the dual alliance, as well as in the recent army increase and army taxes in Germany. Already it may be safely asserted that Germany will not be spared the next and, for the time being, last step of calling to the colors the forty thousand supernumerary and untrained men of military age. An unexpected outbreak of hostilities will, of course, hasten that measure.

The expenses incurred by this additional conscription will not be small; they will amount to about twenty-five million dollars, exclusive of a corresponding initial outlay. Monetary considerations, however, can play no part when the safety of the empire is at stake, particularly in view of the fact that Germany can bear up under the financial strain for a longer period than either England or France, not to speak of the Russians, who exist only by the grace of their French creditors. The means for the support of the forty thousand new recruits will be found somewhere, because they have to be found. With all these sacrifices, those that have been made and those that must still be made, Germany has taken the decisive step for the security of her

place among the nations of Europe, so that her strength may now be considered sufficiently great to permit an unrestricted freedom of action in her enterprises abroad.

The moribund exertions of the French, who have irrefutably arrived at the end of their resources, and cannot even hope enduringly to maintain their present efforts, show plainly that the Germans have practically won out and cannot be paralyzed or outdistanced in matters military or financial. Ruedorffer hits the mark when he says:

> If common sense and judicious evaluation determine human actions, Germany's success must necessarily alter the disposition of her opponents with regard to her plans and enterprises in world policies.

The history of the Morocco question proved that an unusual display of efforts and diplomatic resources as well as a considerable political risk were required of the Germans to achieve fairly satisfactory results.

> These difficulties originate in a geographical situation which arrests the free play of power and checks the freedom of action, and *it is for this reason that Germany, in order to be successful in the pursuance of world policies, must necessarily command an uncommon plentitude of material resources.*

This statement contains the very nucleus of the problem which Germany's foreign policy

must face. That problem once recognized, it is of vital importance to seek unswervingly its practical solution.

Every comprehensive criticism of Germany's measures and successes in international politics must take into consideration that each increased activity abroad resulted in renewed efforts on the continent to form coalitions hostile to the empire. If that be admitted, it is certainly wrong to assert that splendid opportunities have been lost to place Germany on a firm basis in universal politics.

The fact is that heretofore Germany has not been strong enough, on land and on water, separately or jointly, to hazard her national existence in the face of all actual and possible hostile alliances. Only since recently, definite results of the so-called policy of concentration may be hoped for. The naval bill begins to show its intended effect, if not in its entirety, at least approximately; the proposed army taxes have been levied; the recent plan for increasing the army is now an accomplished fact; and in authoritative quarters it has been decided to provide for conscription *to the last man* within the near future.

It must be clearly understood that Germany has scarcely begun to be strong enough for successful participation in world politics, and that the successes scored up to date are mere beginnings, which, for the present, form the

basis of a more extended activity. Politics is a man-made institution and therefore subject to human errors. No doubt, Germany is guilty of errors; but what are they when compared with the two cardinal blunders of the British policy—the cession of Helgoland, and the dreadnaught program? And yet England's power is unimpaired. What makes any given policy a failure? Certainly not the individual mistake, but lack of firmness in the pursuance of a definite aim, a faulty evaluation of the material means at the disposal of the contending nations, and the failure to recognize the proper moment for rendering a vital decision.

A decisive moment may, indeed, be close at hand at the writing of these lines. Germany, no less than other powers, pursued from the very start the policy of forestalling hostile alliances by a system of coalitions of her own. However, alliances, at least according to Bismarck, are tenable only if, in the critical moment, they are in keeping with the respective needs of the contracting parties. In decisive questions of life and death, allied nations, in spite of signed and sealed agreements, stand by each other to the last only if the trend of their fates depends in an equal degree upon the course to be followed.

Germany and Austria-Hungary have been allies of long standing, and yet, when that alliance was first conceived, its creator, Bismarck,

as is attested by his *Reflections and Reminiscences,** was thoroughly convinced that written agreements must always be strengthened by what he terms the durable lining of common interests. Since the inception of the Triple Alliance, to which the German-Austrian relation had soon given rise, there has been, accordingly, no lack of occasional hints to and fro, by which the allies reminded one another of the limits of their common interests.

Bismarck himself stated impressively that Austria's policy must not be tempted to substitute for the underlying purpose of the alliance her private interests in the Orient. Since then the political situation has been assuming an entirely different appearance. Today, Germany and Austria-Hungary alike are faced by the fateful question whether, in the interest of their political existence, peace can still be preserved.

The Servian crime, in itself as well as by its antecedents within and beyond the boundaries of Austria-Hungary, disclosed the fact that the political life of the Austrian monarchy is threatened in its very foundation. If Austria-Hungary does not find a way to put a lasting stop to the Panservian movement, the inevitable result will be that the disintegration of the monarchy into its national constituents can no longer be de-

* Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman; Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto, Prince von Bismarck.

layed. Events such as the Serajewo murder show plainly that matters have reached their limit. It is clear beyond doubt that the conspiracy originated in Servia, that it was supported by the Austrian Serbs, and that it was aimed directly at the destruction of Austria-Hungary. If the murderer and his accomplices at home and abroad are not punished to the extreme limits of the law, with a view of forever eradicating the Panservian idea, and deterring all similar movements of high-treason within the monarchy, it is safe to say that the end of Germany's ally is near at hand.

For Germany there is but one road to travel. If the Hapsburg body politic crumbles, Germany is destined alone to withstand the stupendous pressure of the Slavic masses under the leadership of Russia. By supporting and encouraging Austria, Germany promotes the safety of her own existence. Care must be taken that Servia be deprived of the power to do harm. If Russia interferes by attempting to prevent Austria's punitive measures against Servia, Germany and Austria must jointly bear the necessary consequences, extreme as they may prove to be. Austria-Hungary as a world power must be preserved.

It is not impossible that affairs will culminate in the gigantic war of two fronts; it is even possible that England, in spite of the steady

progress in what amounted to an understanding, will, from the very start, or, if not then, in the more advanced stages of the war, join the ranks of Germany's opponents. If there is no other way, it is up to Germany to fight until victory is attained; or, if that is impossible, to the bitter end. To give up Austria at this juncture would mean ruthlessly to destroy the chances for a support in a combat which, happen what may, will not be spared the country. If peace cannot be preserved, England will begrudge the fruits of victory to Germany no less than to allied Russia and France. Germany, in her turn, cannot afford to let altruistic considerations stand in the way of measures for the protection of the empire from hostile intrusion.

For Italy, as a member of the Triple Alliance, a worthy prize is at stake—Tunis and Algiers. Year after year Italy loses thousands after thousands of emigrants to North and South America. These numbers would suffice to colonize the present French North Africa, which, in a decade or two, will grow into an Italy across the sea, a second Italy, with a population of millions. *Italy will then become a world power.*

Russia's advance must be checked by calling the kingdom of Poland back to life. The Russian colossus with its one hundred and seventy million inhabitants must be divided, in the interest of all Europe. If it is not, the Russian policy

will continue to menace the peace of the continent and the security of Germany and Austria-Hungary. In the face of these possibilities, Russia and France would do well to consider before they let the sword decide the fateful issue. Germany is fully aware of their power, but she needs not fear it, as she is conscious of her own strength and knows full well that the impending struggle will have to be decided sooner or later. *Besides, there will scarcely be a phase more favorable to the German cause than the present alignment of Germany's forces and those of her opponents.*

CHAPTER VII

THE WAR

THE last words of the preceding chapter were written, when, after the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the first shadows of impending war were cast over Europe. Even in the light of a better knowledge regarding the critical situation prior to the Austrian ultimatum, a knowledge more detailed than was accessible to the general public, there seemed to be no hope that Germany's opponents would already find the courage to launch the attack which they had planned for about 1916. The frenzied Russian preparations of 1912-13 and the French three-year conscription, which was effected about the same time, leave no doubt that such an attack had indeed been planned — for details of which, see the preceding chapter.

Two cardinal questions must be answered to explain the outbreak of the war in the summer of 1914 instead of in the spring of 1916. First, why did Russia and France begin hostilities in spite of the unfinished state of strategic railroads in the west and the incomplete armament of the French army? Secondly, why did England immediately join the ranks of the two warring

nations, although she could have enforced peace, at least for the present, by diplomatic pressure on the cabinets of St. Petersburg and Paris?

In the present instance, Germany's and Austria's principal concern was that an apparent and temporary compliance on the part of Russia would force them to wait until Russia and France had actually completed their preparations. For Germany's opponents the beginning of 1916 would have been a far more favorable time, particularly in view of the fact that by the end of winter the greater portion of the German grain provisions would have been consumed and the fighting trim of the navy, owing to the incomplete training of the third-year recruits of the October mustering, greatly impaired. For the present, there seems but one explanation: Obviously the Russian government was not strong enough to resist the tempestuous Panslavic demands in behalf of Servia and the danger of an internal revolution.

If the czar and his cabinet had abandoned the cause of Servia, or even appeared to abandon it, they would have gambled for head and shoulder with the grand-ducal, Panslavic war-party. Presumably, therefore, they told France and England: We must and will declare war now. That decision forced France inevitably to ally herself with Russia. It seems as if Russia decided upon her fatal step immediately after the

Serajevo murder. No doubt, Russia knew only too well where the traces of the Servian crime would lead the Austrian investigators, and she was reasonably convinced that Austria, supported by her German ally, was this time ready to fight for her life.

Austria was, indeed, forced to appeal to the sword; her failure to do so would have meant political suicide. If Servia escaped punishment and were not compelled to give effectual guaranties against further Panslavic intrigues in Austria, the Hapsburg body politic will scarcely survive, for any length of time, the death of Emperor Francis Joseph. On the other hand, only a strong Russian government, sure of its aim, could have afforded the venture, in the face of internal opposition, of permitting Servia to be overthrown by the Austrians and, at the same time, proceeding with her military preparations for the final issue with Austria and Germany.

One fact alone will suffice to prove that it was impossible to stem the tide of ruling passions in Russia. Emperor William, in the eleventh hour, recommended to the Austrian government, as a last resort, to occupy only Belgrade and northern Servia and to confer with Russia regarding all further measures. But the Russian government, though fully apprised of Emperor William's efforts to preserve peace,* was unable to stop

* See Appendix, p. 179.

the general mobilization of the Russian army. The best thinker in the Russian cabinet, the old secretary of agriculture, Kriwoschejin, was the only member who had the courage to oppose the war. Of the minister of war it is said that he was eager for war but at the same time pessimistic as to the outcome. In spite of this, the war-party, headed by the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolajewitsch, won out.

This turn of events can be explained only by the well-known exuberance of public feeling in Russia, which in critical moments had more than once been a dangerous factor. Besides, it would seem that Germany's readiness for war had been underrated, while too much reliance was placed on the military preparedness of France. Russia's deceitful assertion regarding the mobilization of her army, words for the truth of which the czar and his counsellors had pledged their princely honor, were intended to gain a few days' start of the greatly feared speed of Germany's mobilization.

To understand England's attitude is indeed a difficult task. A satisfactory explanation is perhaps best obtained by retracing the various steps of her policy, beginning with her declaration of war. It is safe to assume that immediately after the Serajevo murder, the outbreak of war and England's decision to join Germany's opponents were practically assured facts. When Russia

had determined upon war, England was placed before an alternative which in its significance is unparalleled in the history of her foreign politics. There is no doubt that England pursued her conciliatory policies with Germany always with the definite aim that, whatever steps she would decide upon if Germany became involved in a war, particularly with Russia and France, her own welfare would take precedence over any other interests.

Was England's complaisant disposition in the Bagdad-railroad question and in the African issues only a disguise for a long-cherished plan of joining with Russia and France in an attack upon Germany? Or was her decision to take up arms against Germany the result of Russia's desire to declare war and to draw France into the struggle?

Now that the tide of affairs has turned, there seems no need of concealing the fact that the treaties with England regarding the boundaries of Germany's spheres of interest in the Orient and in Africa were signed and sealed and that nothing but the question of their publication was left for discussion. In Africa, England's policy had made surprising concessions to Germany. In Turkey, Germany's wishes had been readily met, with regard to both the Bagdad railroad and a number of allied branches, such as the establishment of shipping lines on the Tigris and

the working of the oil fields in Mesopotamia. The last two enterprises, which had been entirely under England's control, were now being managed with the help of German capital.

There was indeed every reason to believe that England was resigned to recognize Germany's competition on a broader base than had heretofore been possible, in the Turkish Orient as well as in the tropical regions of Africa. The deeper psychological reason for her change of policy lies hidden in the gradual disappearance of her suspicion that Germany was conspiring against the safety of the British empire. There is a great deal of truth in the old but frequently forgotten maxim, that it is not the actual aims of contending governments and nations which determine their relation to each other, but rather the mutual interpretations of such aims. It had been England's suspicion for years past that Germany was planning an attack upon her, but that opinion began to allay since the days of the Morocco crisis.

The increasing activity of Russia in the questions touching upon the Balkan and the Orient created a feeling of uneasiness in England. As a result, the English policy, since the first Balkan crisis, worked parallel with that of Germany, or even collaborated with it, in order to forestall Russia's manifold advances in the direction of the Mediterranean Sea. Russia's plans in the

Balkans and Asiatic Turkey having been repeatedly frustrated, it seemed impossible for the Russian government, after the Serajewo crime, to retain control of its internal affairs. Nor was it Germany's firmness alone which created this situation; England's displeasure at the Russian Mediterranean policy contributed to it in no small degree. If now the war of the dual alliance against Germany did break out, no matter whether, in English opinion, prematurely abetted, or not at all, it was up to England to decide with whom she would best cast her lot.

England calculated that if she were to remain neutral, a complete defeat of France and a victorious repulsion of the Russian attack would be the most likely result. Russia's financial collapse would inevitably follow, which, in turn, would preclude the chance for renewing the war against Germany at once or within the near future. It is not difficult, from an English viewpoint, to appreciate the undesirable or even dangerous contingencies of a future such as would evolve from this turn of events. It is quite a different matter to establish friendly relations with the Germans and to grant concessions in Africa and in the Orient to a Germany that is encompassed by her French and Russian opponents, and on the other hand, to have dealings with a Germany that is unimpeded by considerations for its neighbors.

Let there be no mistake: these are arguments from the English point of view. France and Russia having been defeated, what can prevent Germany, under the impulse of a great national revival and by means of the French indemnity of war, from building a navy which fully equals that of England? Who can prevent Italy, which as an active ally of Germany would help to bring France to her knees, from annexing French North Africa and making the Mediterranean an Italian sea? Italy, with Tunis and Sicily in her possession, can gain complete control of the Mediterranean route between Gibraltar and the Suez canal, so that no ship would be able to pass without her express consent.

England cannot deceive the world regarding the real issue at stake. For her it was not the question of remaining neutral or not,* but the possibility or even probability of experiencing the rise of a new Germany destined to gain the ascendency over Great Britain.

If England, from the very beginning, had consented to a re-adjustment of German-English relations after the war, Germany would no doubt have been willing to furnish a sufficient guaranty for guarding the English interests in a number of important points. Yet for a country such as England, conscious of its power, it would have been difficult to condescend to an agreement of

* See Appendix, p. 174.

that nature. It is therefore not to be wondered at if the English policy did not even entertain the possibility of such a solution. Instead, England offered neutrality, if Germany consented to a vital restriction of her military operations. It consisted in the double-edged demand that Germany should respect the neutrality of Belgium and that no hostile attacks against the coast of France, either in the North Sea and the English Channel or from the Atlantic Ocean, must be undertaken, so that France would be able to send her entire fleet against Italy and Austria. One of these two conditions might have been open for discussion, while the other was entirely out of question.

Belgium was undeniably a neutral state, no less than Denmark in 1807. And yet England took away the Danish fleet in the midst of peace. England's action is typical for the question whether or not the neutrality of little states, which for particular reasons are of importance to powerful warring nations, is to be respected. In 1805, at the outbreak of the so-called third war of coalition against France, Denmark had declared her neutrality. On the sea, England was fighting against Napoleon, and on the continent, Austria and Russia.

For the English it was of the greatest importance that Napoleon should not gain possession of a navy which could cover the transport of an

army of invasion to England. For that somewhat distant day, Denmark's navy was of a size not to be ignored. In view of the possibility that Napoleon might compel Denmark, as he had done in the case of Spain, to place her fleet at his disposal, England sent an ultimatum to Denmark in which she threatened to use force if the Danish government did not turn over the entire Danish navy to England and enter into an alliance with her. Denmark refused to comply, whereupon the English bombarded Copenhagen for four days (from September 2 to September 5) and took the entire fleet with them to England.

It is characteristic of England's way of doing things that simultaneously with the attack on Copenhagen she issued a manifesto to the Danish people to the effect that England's action was not due to any hostility against Denmark, but was deemed necessary in the interest of peace and humanity; that is to say, in order to rob Napolean, the disturber of peace, of the chance to attack England, the cradle of freedom.

It is instructive to compare England's violation of Denmark's neutrality with Germany's violation of Belgium's neutrality. England acted in the interest of her safety against a possible French attack; Germany acted not only in the interest of her safety but in the interest of her very existence. The German people are en-

gaged in a war of two fronts, against Russia and against France. This struggle can be won only if it is possible first to defeat one opponent, and thereupon the other. To split the army and to send the two halves respectively against Russia and France, would render either half too weak for victory. Nor could Austria's assistance help matters greatly, as the Russian front is of such length and the Russian army so enormous that Germany and Austria-Hungary are simultaneously exposed to a Russian attack. The war against Russia requires a smaller force and must be waged on the defensive, while in the west a more vigorous campaign is paramount.

Russia's mobilization is slow and the mustering of her troops requires a great deal of time; France, on the other hand, has the same facilities to mobilize her forces as Germany. The German-French frontier is only a few hundred kilometers long, of which a goodly part is occupied by the Vosges mountain, a region which makes military operations on a larger scale extremely difficult. The mustering grounds opposite the open section have for the past ten or fifteen years been so strongly fortified by the French that it would be an extremely difficult task in this region to overthrow the hostile forces within a short space of time.

If the Germans are to defeat the French before the vast Russian hordes throw themselves upon

the eastern front of the empire, it is essential to extend the western lines of attack. Only in that way it is possible to outstrip the French and force their retreat. But to extend the line of attack it is necessary to send the troops through Belgian territory. For this reason the German government requested the Belgians to grant the German armies a peaceful passage through their country.

The French power of resistance would have been greatly strengthened if Germany had bowed to England's demand of respecting the Belgian neutrality. The formidable position of the French in Lorraine would have resulted in a great loss of time to the Germans and in enormous sacrifices. In a modern war it is almost impossible to take well-occupied and strongly-fortified positions by a frontal attack. Obviously, Russia would have gained time to complete her mustering, and a Russian army of millions would have invaded Germany from the east while the principal German forces were still in action against the French in the west. A war under such circumstances could be only fatal for Germany; at best, peace might have been concluded as the result of general exhaustion.

A termination of the world war in the manner indicated would, of course, be entirely to the liking of England. If the German forces were, after all, successful in defeating the French, in

due time and with untold sacrifices, England would nevertheless have recourse to the medium of intervention; that is, the medium of an alliance with France and Russia against a weakened Germany. Nor is there the slightest doubt that England would have made use of that expedient if her interests seemed to demand it.

In how far Germany would affect England's interests has been stated in a widely-famed article in the *Saturday Review,* a London periodical. Commercial jealousy — the writer of this article maintains — will some day create from innumerable little frictions the most stupendous *casus belli* the world has yet experienced. If tomorrow Germany were to perish from the earth, there would not be an Englishman living who the day after would not be the richer for it. Nations have been struggling for years in order to gain possession of a single city or of the right of succession to a throne; why should they not be willing to wage war for capturing a trade amounting to an annual total of one and a quarter billion dollars?

That article appeared in 1897. Since then, Germany's trade, which is the real cause of England's animosity, more than doubled in value. How much more must the English threats contained in the *Saturday Review* apply to present-day conditions! There is, accordingly, every reason to suppose that Germany's strict regard

for the Belgian neutrality would not have saved her, sooner or later, from facing England's overt hostility. On the other hand, the restriction to Lorraine of the German offensive would have inevitably resulted in a great many military disadvantages and uncounted losses of human lives. On the Belgian-French frontier French troops were ready, in their turn, to advance against the right flank of the German army. French officers were in Liége when the first advances of the German army attacked that city.

According to recent reports in French newspapers, great quantities of ammunition for the use of English artillery, had been stored, as early as 1913, at Maubeuge, a French fortress near the Belgian border. That these stores were intended for English ordnance was ascertained by their caliber, which differed from that in use by the French artillery. Obviously, provisions had been made to land English troops in France and, jointly with the French forces, undertake military operations from the Belgian border as a basis. Besides, it must be remembered that English army officers had confidentially confessed to a plan, which had been discussed by England and France during the Morocco crisis in 1911, of sending, in the event of a war with Germany, an English expeditionary force to the continent. This contingent, as was admitted, was to force an entrance to the Scheldt at Flushing, thereupon

land in Antwerp, and from there, by way of Belgium, advance against the German army.

From the foregoing evidence, it appears that England had not entertained the slightest thought of respecting the neutrality of Belgium if her interest in the military subjection of Germany demanded the violation of that neutrality. If it had been a matter of certainty, or even of probability, that England, in consideration of Germany's regard for the Belgian neutrality, would have declared herself neutral, to no greater extent even than in 1870-71, when she supplied France with munitions of war and provisions, the Belgian question would have presented itself in an entirely different light for Germany. But no such guaranty had been given. On the contrary, there was every reason to believe that the very opposite was the case, and, therefore, nothing was left for Germany but to demand the passage through Belgium.*

* It does not seem to be generally known that the British government frankly appreciates the necessity for Germany's violation of the Belgian neutrality. In one of the early editions of the English *Blue Book* the following passage appears:

"Germany's position must be understood. She had fulfilled her treaty obligations in the past; her action now was not wanton. Belgium was of extreme military importance in a war with France; if such a war occurred it would be one of life and death. Germany feared that if she did not occupy Belgium, France might do so. In the face of this suspicion there was only one thing to do. . . ."

In all subsequent editions of the English *Blue Book* this passage has been omitted, a fact brought to light in the recent Viereck-Chesterton debate. P. H. P.

Prior to the occupation, and again after the fall of Liége, Germany offered to the Belgium government a full guaranty that the boundaries and the independence of Belgium were not in the least to be affected by the war. But Belgium preferred not to accept Germany's well-meant proposition, and resorted to the decision of the sword. Belgium's forcible resistance most naturally had to be broken — a necessity which no one deplored more than the German government. It cannot be too often repeated that only by means of the passage through Belgium it is possible for Germany to defeat the French in time for successfully warding off the onslaught of the overwhelming Russian forces in the east. The outcome of the war, the fate of Germany, and the future of Germanic culture and civilization have been dependent on the Belgian question.

England's demand that Germany respect the neutrality of Belgium at all events, has another more distinctive motive which is rooted in the time-honored traditions of the British foreign policy. Ever since the age of Louis XIV it has been an English principle not to deliver Belgium into the hands of a strong continental power. During the reign of that king, France, for a number of decades, persisted in her strenuous efforts to gain possession of Belgium, for which reason she aroused for an

equal length of time the obdurate enmity of the island kingdom.

Whoever possesses Belgium is in the position at any time to gain a hold on Holland. These sea-washed, thickly populated countries, with their great wealth and countless industries, occupied in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a commercial rank among the nations of Europe of greater importance than they do even today. If France had gained lasting possession of Belgium and Holland, she would have thereby so increased her power, particularly with regard to her commerce and the control of the seas, that alone in the newly acquired territories, which England had hitherto claimed for her own commercial activity, she would presumably have become a successful rival of the English. Such an inroad upon England's supremacy was not to be tolerated.

A similar feeling with regard to Belgium prevails in the case of Germany. England fears that the Germans, once in Belgium, will not leave that country, in which case the English will find themselves suddenly confronted by the unwelcome fact that a stretch of German coast land all but borders upon their own territory. There is no need of describing the effect of that realization upon the English national consciousness.

No matter how the problem of England's attitude is attacked, the conclusion is invariably

the same: Either England must attempt so to impede Germany's victory over France and Russia that it is politically of no practical value, or be content with the prospect of Germany's growth in world power at the expense of England. Germany is calmly confident, regarding the military as well as the political outcome of the struggle, that England's plan of action as it now stands will eventually prove favorable for Germany and unfavorable for England. Germany will defeat France, and will be more than a match for Russia.

In all probability internal difficulties in the countries of her two opponents will support her in gaining the victory. And when the war is over, Germany and Austria-Hungary, the heart of Europe, will be more powerful than ever, successfully resisting the yoke of England's indomitable imperiousness. It would have been an incalculably wiser policy if England had from the start taken Germany's victory for granted, and jointly with her laid plans for a peaceful understanding in the future. But such a move was not to England's liking. Instead, she preferred to fight for what with characteristic English pride she terms her "supremacy" on the seas and in the far-off quarters of the globe. But, even so, Germany will be able not only to maintain but also to strengthen her place as a world power.

It must be conceded, however, that England's attitude has in another direction resulted in a temporary disadvantage to Germany's political and strategic position. Italy, under English pressure, suspended her terms of alliance with Germany and Austria and declared herself neutral. In defense of their action, the Italians offer a formal explanation to the effect that only in the event of an offensive war on the part of France they would have been obliged to render assistance against Germany's enemy; in the present case, however, Germany declared war on France, not vice versa.

It may, of course, be argued, by way of rejoinder, that the question in point is not, "Who declared the war?" but "Who is the assailant?" That Germany was not the assailant is an incontestable fact, in view of Emperor William's efforts to preserve peace — efforts which were strained to the degree of endangering the safety of the empire. Nor is Italy's action due to her interpretation of the Triple Alliance; the real cause must be sought in her fear to arouse the enmity of England.

A glance at the map of Italy and the balance of her foreign trade will suffice to explain her compliant attitude to England's demand. The Italian coast is exposed to the attack of every hostile navy which is superior to that of Italy. The most important Italian railroad lines, the

arteries of her traffic on land, run along the coast. Her whole industrial life can be vitally affected by a superior naval force of her enemy. Italy's export amounts to about five hundred million dollars; her import, according to official statistics, to seven hundred million dollars, more or less. Her greatest trading activity is with oversea countries. Among the articles of import are grain and seed valued at ninety million dollars; cotton and cotton textiles at eighty million dollars; coal at almost sixty million dollars; meat and vegetable food products, except grain, at forty million dollars; raw material, except coal, at one hundred million dollars.

From these figures it seems plain that Italy faces economic ruin if her supply is cut off. But, above all, Italy has no coal mines, all her coal for industrial purposes, for railroads, and navigation being supplied by England. In the light of these facts her motives for acquiescing in England's threatening demands may be clearly understood. Of course, a daring and far-reaching policy might have safely offset all scruples and risks by the great thought of an Italian North Africa. Italy's net loss by emigration within the last five years averaged almost a half million souls annually — a number large enough within a decade to settle the present French North Africa with Italian colonists. This and nothing else constitutes the plan of a future Greater Italy,

cherished by all far-seeing Italians, an idea far loftier and greater than the time-worn *Italia Irredenta,* the unredeemed Italy, which is inhabited by Italians under foreign, particularly Austrian, rule.

That question, no less than all others, will be automatically settled in the great accounting to which all Europe has been subjected. And yet Italy ought to consider that only as a friend of Germany and Austria-Hungary she is likely to attain the goal of her one desire. An English-French victory would not let her rise above a second- or even third-rate power in the Mediterranean Sea, while as a member of the Triple Alliance she may become a world power. However, great fortitude is demanded to attain great ends.

It cannot be too often repeated that the strength of the two allied powers, above all, that of Germany, depends upon the army which derives its power from the perfect union of government and governed, upon the excellence of the army itself, and upon the impossibility of reducing Germany and Austria-Hungary to starvation. Germany raises sufficient farm products, and her supply of live stock is more than ample. All necessary minerals such as coal and iron ore are dug from her own mines. Gas, electricity, and steam power can be generated as required; arms and munitions of war can be manufactured without foreign

help and in unlimited quantities. Petroleum and similar products are supplied by Galicia and Roumania in sufficient quantities for military purposes.

The shutting down of extensive industrial activities and the subsequent unemployment of millions of workmen are, of course, a grave calamity. It must be repeated that a danger of complete paralysis can grow out of these distressing conditions only if those, who even during the war draw an income from either property or labor, fail to share it with their less fortunate countrymen. If, for reasons such as these, Germany is compelled to conclude a disastrous peace, she does, indeed, deserve no better fate.

But the Germans may face the future with calmness and intrepidity; for it is impossible to break the armed forces of a power such as united Germany and Austria-Hungary. To bring this about, the Germans would have to be faced by enemies who are their superiors in point of number and at least their equals in political uniformity, national enthusiasm, all-around excellence of military institutions, and in the moral strength of their reason for war.

It can scarcely be said that Germany's foes, taken all in all, possess these attributes. Not one of them is fighting for his existence. Russia and France are blindly following the call of national animosity, which, no doubt, will recoil

upon their own national life as soon as their armies suffer repeated defeats. England is waging a preventive war by seizing her last chance of hindering Germany's development to a world power which, in the natural course of events, is destined to end England's supremacy on the seas. Let it be supposed, for the sake of argument, that Germany were defeated. England's policy in that case would try its utmost to prevent Russia and France from gaining such strength as to endanger English interests. A Germany, supreme among the nations on the continent, is England's ardent desire; Germany as a world power, an unwelcome rival.

It is not at all unlikely that in the course of the war England will sooner or later seek an opportune moment for concluding a separate peace with Germany. Such proposals will not find a willing ear in Germany. It is a well-known fact that the war against Germany is not the uniform expression of the popular will in England, either of the common people or of the cultured classes.

In the case of France it is no less true that the great masses of the nation were opposed to the war. The rag tag and bobtail, the swashbucklers, fire-eaters, and the blustering editors of jingo papers were howling for war because, for over forty years, they had hypnotized themselves into a war of revenge. On the other hand, the

French bourgeois, the vintager, the wholesale merchant and manufacturer, the exporter, and the laborer were at heart opposed to the war. If now reverses and defeats follow in the wake of the conflict, there is plainly a vast difference between the attitude of a whole nation which lends its strength and moral support to a life and death struggle, forced upon it by a brutal and unscrupulous attack of an opponent, and the spirit of masses which, taken by surprise as they were, give vent to their outraged feelings by the cry, "To the lamp-post with the scoundrels that brought misery upon our heads!"

Yet, after all, we Germans must not pride ourselves too much on our good qualities and look down upon other nations as our inferiors. To cite but one illustration, the moral corruption and national disgrace which express themselves in an aversion to child-bearing and a decrease in the birth rate, have made an alarming progress in Germany though they are still far from reaching the degree of moral corrosion which characterises even the humbler elements of the French nation. The family which dreads the child cannot engender death-defying courage for its country.

Least of all Germany has cause to fear Russia. Only those that are unfamiliar with Russia have reason to fear her. Neither the vastness of the empire nor the overwhelming numbers of her

military forces can impress those that possess a more comprehensive knowledge of Russia's internal affairs. The words of the old chronicler, Nestor of Kiev, who tells of the calling of the Norman princes by the Slavic tribes around Nizhni-Novgorod, "Our country is large and rich, but disorder ruleth therein; come ye then and rule over us!" apply to Russia today no less than when they were first uttered, almost a thousand years ago. A task of such great significance as a modern war which strains every fiber in the organism of the state more than any other war which Russia has ever waged, can be undertaken only if perfect order prevails in the country; not order in the sense of police regulations, but the higher order of political and national morality.

Russia lacks these essential qualities. From the calling out of the reserves and the levy of the militia from their villages at the Volga River, from the Ural district, the industrial center of Moscow, the south Russian steppe, and the forests of the North to the muster of regiments and army corps for the first decisive battle in the west of the empire innumerable obstacles, physically, technically, and morally, have to be overcome. Stupidity and resistance of the new men, unscrupulousness, brutality, and corruption on the part of officials, lack of executive ability, inefficient railroad service, and revolutionary

tendencies in Poland, these and similar defects so impair the efficiency of the army that but little remains of its greatly feared strength in the field.

The German quidnunc militarists and pot-house politicians are still citing Napoleon's downfall in Russia as a *mene, tekel* and a proof for her immunity from attack. Napoleon's army perished partly on the march to Moscow partly on the way back since, owing to inadequate transportation facilities, it was impossible to obtain sufficient supply either from the territory of operation or from the European basis. That contingency is made impossible by the modern net of railroads and other means of communications. Sceptics are fond of pointing out another danger, the intrepidity of the Russian soldier in battle. True enough, Frederick the Great was in the habit of saying that to shoot the Russian lubbers was not enough; they would have to be pushed over in the bargain.

But it must be remembered that Frederick the Great lived at a time when armies were led against each other in straight lines and closed ranks, the officers before the front as if on parade. The individual man, the battalion, or the whole regiment had but to obey orders, to load, to fire, to wheel or to hold their ground. A modern battle, however, makes much higher demands on the private no less than on the general. An independent judgment,

initiative, and a judicious application are essential requirements without which today no great battle can be won. Fortunately these are not found in the Russian soldier to such a degree that they will command the respect of the foe. Russia's ancient authorities, serfdom, and the belief in the czar as the temporal and spiritual ruler of the empire, have been shattered in their foundation and can no longer be regarded as the basis of obedience and self-sacrifice.

It is possible that the Russian army, in view of its overwhelming numerical superiority, will be able temporarily to occupy a piece of German soil, as long as the German forces are still engaged in France. And yet it is safe to prophecy that the world will stand aghast at the degree of Russia's inefficiency which will become evident when the combined German and Austrian armies seriously clash with the Russian hordes. After the first great defeats, Russia, in addition to her military inferiority, must face another grave crisis — the Revolution.

For such reasons as the foregoing the Germans may be convinced that the present war will result in enduring advantages for their country. Occasional reverses brought about by strategic errors on the German side or by numerical superiority of the enemy may, of course, be expected. Yet, there is no reason to suppose that the war will take a decisive turn to Germany's disadvan-

tage. Only cataclysms, acts of God not subject to human control, or the selfishness of the more fortunate classes who are unwilling to share their plenty with their unemployed and suffering fellow citizens until the enemy is defeated, can force Germany into submission.

At the very beginning, in the preface, it has been pointed out that the victory in the war which is now raging, is not so much a military as a moral test of strength. It seems as if the military test, at least in its most serious phases, has been successfully passed. Regarding the moral aspect of the struggle it may be confidently hoped, in the light of events that have come to pass since the outbreak of the war, that the people of the German Empire will answer the question of national self-sacrifice in the affirmative even before it is asked.

That fateful question satisfactorily answered, it may not be amiss to cast a glance into the future. To mete out rewards and punishments before the victory is assured seems indeed useless, and yet, it is possible, if not necessary, to draw a general outline of the conditions on which peace will be concluded. In spite of the hatred toward Germany, a hatred which the French have been nursing for over forty years, there is no need of reducing the rank of France as a world power. Territorially this would mean that her continental boundaries be left undisturbed and

the greater part of her North-African possessions untouched. Financially, however, the indemnity imposed upon her can scarcely be too large.

Russia with her population of one hundred and seventy million, must at all hazards be reduced, and her ability to attack Central Europe diminished. It will not be difficult to carry out such a plan as large stretches of western and southern Russia are inhabited by non-Russian peoples who would hail their release from the control of the czar with every show of satisfaction.

But the real enemy of Germany, and not only of Germany but of the culture and civilization of all Europe, the enemy who for the sake of his own commercial profits delivered Germany into the hands of the Muscovite and conspired to rob Germany of her rightfully earned place among the nations of the world, that enemy is — England. Peace with England is impossible until her power to do harm has been broken for ever. It would be premature to discuss the ways and means which lead to that end. Let it suffice to say that those ways and means exist, and that Germany is resolved to use them in due time. Then, and then only Germany's future will be assured. To display leniency toward England is now but to commit an act of treason against the future of the German Empire.

APPENDIX

THE following "exhibits" are no part of the original (German) edition of Dr. Rohrbach's book. They have been added, by way of appendix, as a substantial support of certain claims set forth in Chapter VII. Briefly recapitulated these claims are:

(1) That neither friendship for France nor treaty obligations to Belgium but solely economic considerations have determined England to take part in the war.

(2) That Russia had decided upon war and continued mobilization in spite of the acknowledged efforts of Emperor William to preserve peace.

The significant passages in each document are printed in italics.

I

STATEMENT BY SIR EDWARD GREY IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, AUGUST 3, 1914.

Last week I stated that we were working for peace not only for this country, but to preserve the peace of Europe. Today events move so rapidly that it is exceedingly difficult to state with technical accuracy the actual state of affairs, but it is clear that the peace of Europe cannot be preserved. Russia and Germany, at any rate, have declared war upon each other.

Before I proceed to state the position of His Majesty's Government, I would like to clear the ground so that, before I come to state to the House what our attitude is with regard to the present crisis, the House may know exactly under what obligations the Government is, or the House can be said to be, in coming to a decision on that matter. First of all let me say, very shortly, that we have consistently worked with a single mind, with all the earnestness in our power, to preserve peace. The House may be satisfied on that point. We have always done it. During these last years, as far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, we would have no difficulty in proving that we have done so. Throughout the Balkan crisis, by general admission, we worked for peace. The cooperation of the Great Powers of Europe was successful in working for peace in the Balkan crises. It is true that some of the Powers had great difficulty in adjusting their points of view. It took much time and labour and discussion before they could settle their differences, but peace was secured, because peace was their main object, and they were willing to give time and trouble rather than accentuate differences rapidly.

In the present crisis, it has not been possible to secure the peace of Europe; because there has been little time, and there has been a disposition — at any rate in some quarters on which I will not dwell — to force things rapidly to an issue, at any rate to the great risk of peace, and as we now know, the result of that is that the policy of peace as far as the Great Powers generally are concerned, is in danger. I do not want to dwell on that, and to comment on it, and to say where the blame seems to us to lie, which Powers were most in favour of peace, which were most disposed to risk or endanger peace, because *I would like the House to approach this crisis in which we are now from the point of view of British interests, British honour, and British obligations,*

free from all passion as to why peace has not been preserved.

We shall publish papers as soon as we can regarding what took place last week when we were working for peace; and when those papers are published I have no doubt that to every human being they will make it clear how strenuous and genuine and whole-hearted our efforts for peace were, and that they will enable people to form their own judgment as to what forces were at work which operated against peace.

I come first, now, to the question of British obligations. I have assured the House — and the Prime Minister has assured the House more than once — that if any crisis such as this arose we should come before the House of Commons and be able to say to the House that it was free to decide what the British attitude should be, that we would have no secret engagement which we should spring upon the House, and tell the House that because we had entered into that engagement there was an obligation of honour upon the country. I will deal with that point to clear the ground first.

There have been in Europe two diplomatic groups, the Triple Alliance and what came to be called the Triple Entente, for some years past. The Triple Entente was not an alliance — it was a diplomatic group. The House will remember that in 1908 there was a crisis — also a Balkan crisis — originating in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian Minister, M. Isvolsky, came to London, or happened to come to London, because his visit was planned before the crisis broke out. I told him definitely then, this being a Balkan crisis, a Balkan affair, I did not consider that public opinion in this country would justify us in promising to give anything more than diplomatic support. More was never asked from us, more was never given, and more was never promised.

In this present crisis, up till yesterday, we have also given no promise of anything more than diplomatic support — up till yesterday no promise of more than diplomatic support. Now I must make this question of obligation clear to the House. I must go back to the first Moroccan crisis of 1906. That was the time of the Algeciras Conference, and it came at a time of very great difficulty to His Majesty's Government when a general election was in progress, and Ministers were scattered over the country, and I — spending three days a week in my constituency and three days at the Foreign Office — was asked the question whether, if that crisis developed into war between France and Germany, we would give armed support. I said then that I could promise nothing to any foreign Power unless it was subsequently to receive the whole-hearted support of public opinion here if the occasion arose. I said, in my opinion, if war was forced upon France then on the question of Morocco — a question which had just been the subject of agreement between this country and France, an agreement exceedingly popular on both sides — that if out of that agreement war was forced on France at that time, in my view public opinion in this country would have rallied to the material support of France.

I gave no promise, but I expressed that opinion during the crisis, as far as I remember almost in the same words, to the French Ambassador and the German Ambassador at the time. I made no promise, and I used no threats; but I expressed that opinion. That position was accepted by the French Government, but they said to me at the time, and I think very reasonably, "If you think it possible that the public opinion of Great Britain might, should a sudden crisis arise, justify you in giving to France the armed support which you cannot promise in advance, you will not be able to give that

support, even if you wish it, when the time comes, unless some conversations have already taken place between naval and military experts." There was force in that. I agreed to it, and authorized those conversations to take place, but on the distinct understanding that nothing which passed between military or naval experts should bind either Government or restrict in any way their freedom to make a decision as to whether or not they would give that support when the time arose.

As I told the House, upon that occasion a great election was in prospect; I had to take the responsibility of doing that without the Cabinet. It could not be summoned. An answer had to be given. I consulted Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister; I consulted, I remember, Lord Haldane, who was then Secretary of State for War; and the present Prime Minister, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. That was the most I could do, and they authorized that, on the distinct understanding that it left the hands of the Government free whenever the crisis arose. The fact that conversations between military and naval experts took place was later on — I think much later on, because that crisis passed, and the thing ceased to be of importance — but later on it was brought to the knowledge of the Cabinet.

The Agadir crisis came — another Morocco crisis — and throughout that I took precisely the same line that had been taken in 1906. But subsequently, in 1912, after discussion and consideration in the Cabinet, it was decided that we ought to have a definite understanding in writing, which was to be only in the form of an unofficial letter, that these conversations which took place were not binding upon the freedom of either Government; and on the 22nd of November, 1912, I wrote to the French Ambassador the letter which I will now read to the House, and I received a letter from him in similar

terms in reply. The letter which I have to read to the House is this, and it will be known to the public now as the record that, whatever took place between military and naval experts, they were not binding engagements upon the Government.

My Dear Ambassador:

From time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not, and ought not, to be regarded as an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not yet arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British fleets respectively at the present moment is not based upon an engagement to cooperate in war.

You have, however, pointed out that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other.

I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common.

Lord Charles Beresford: What is the date of that?

Sir E. Grey: November 22, 1912. This is the starting point for the Government with regard to the present crisis. I think it makes it clear that what the Prime Minister and I said to the House of Commons was perfectly justified, and that, as regards our freedom to decide in a crisis what our line should be, whether we should intervene or whether we should sustain, the Government remained perfectly free, and *a fortiori,* the House of Commons remains perfectly free. That I say to clear the ground from the point of view of obligation. I think it was due to prove our good faith to the House of Commons that I should give that full information to the House now, and say what I think is obvious from the letter I have just read, that we do not construe anything which has previously taken place in our diplomatic relations with other Powers in this matter as restricting the freedom of the Government to decide what attitude they should take now, or restrict the freedom of the House of Commons to decide what their attitude should be.

Well, Sir, I will go further, and I will say this: The situation in the present crisis is not precisely the same as it was in the Morocco question. In the Morocco question it was primarily a dispute which concerned France—a dispute which concerned France and France primarily—a dispute, as it seemed to us, affecting France out of an agreement subsisting between us and France, and published to the whole world, in which we engaged to give France diplomatic support. No doubt we were pledged to give nothing but diplomatic support; we were, at any rate, pledged by a definite public agreement to stand with France diplomatically in that question.

The present crisis has originated differently. It

has not originated with regard to Morocco. It has not originated as regards anything with which we had a special agreement with France; it has not originated with anything which primarily concerned France. It has originated in a dispute between Austria and Servia. I can say this with the most absolute confidence — no Government and no country has less desire to be involved in war over a dispute with Austria and Servia than the Government and the country of France. They are involved in it because of their obligation of honor under a definite alliance with Russia. Well, *it is only fair to say to the House that that obligation of honor cannot apply in the same way to us. We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance.* We do not even know the terms of that alliance. So far, I have, I think, faithfully and completely cleared the ground with regard to the question of obligation.

I now come to what we think the situation requires of us. For many years we have had a long-standing friendship with France. I remember well the feeling in the House — and my own feeling — for I spoke on the subject, I think, when the late Government made their agreement with France — the warm and cordial feeling resulting from the fact that these two nations, who had had perpetual differences in the past, had cleared these differences away; I remember saying, I think, that it seemed to me that some benign influence had been at work to produce the cordial atmosphere that had made that possible. But how far that friendship entails obligation — it has been a friendship between the nations and ratified by the nations — how far that entails an obligation, let every man look into his own heart, and his own feelings, and construe the extent of the obligation for himself. I construe it myself as I feel it, but I do not wish to urge upon any one else more than their feelings dictate as to

what they should feel about the obligation. The House, individually and collectively, may judge for itself. I speak my personal view, and I have given the House my own feeling in the matter.

The French fleet is now in the Mediterranean, and the northern and western coasts of France are absolutely undefended. The French fleet being concentrated in the Mediterranean, the situation is very different from what it used to be, because the friendship which has grown up between the two countries has given them a sense of security that there was nothing to be feared from us.

The French coasts are absolutely undefended. The French fleet is in the Mediterranean, and has for some years been concentrated there because of the feeling of confidence and friendship which has existed between the two countries. My own feeling is that if a foreign fleet, engaged in a war which France had not sought, and in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France, we could not stand aside, and see this going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately, doing nothing. I believe that would be the feeling of this country. There are times when one feels that if these circumstances actually did arise, it would be a feeling which would spread with irresistible force throughout the land.

But *I also want to look at the matter without sentiment, and from the point of view of British interests, and it is on that that I am going to base and justify what I am presently going to say to the House.* If we say nothing at this moment, what is France to do with her fleet in the Mediterranean? If she leaves it there, with no statement from us as to what we will do, she leaves her northern and western coasts absolutely undefended, at the mercy of a German fleet coming down the

Channel to do as it pleases in a war which is a war of life and death between them. If we say nothing, it may be that the French fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean. We are in the presence of a European conflagration; can anybody set limits to the consequences that may arise out of it? Let us assume that today we stand aside in an attitude of neutrality, saying, "No, we cannot undertake and engage to help either party in this conflict." *Let us suppose the French fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean;* and let us assume that the consequences — which are already tremendous in what has happened in Europe even to countries that are at peace — in fact, equally whether countries are at peace or at war — *let us assume that out of that come consequences unforeseen, which make it necessary at a sudden moment that, in defence of vital British interests, we should go to war,* and let us assume — which is quite possible — that Italy, who is now neutral — because, as I understand, she considers that this war is an aggressive war, and the Triple Alliance being a defensive alliance, her obligation did not arise — let us assume that consequences which are not yet foreseen and which, perfectly legitimately consulting her own interests, make Italy depart from her attitude of neutrality at a time when we are forced in defence of vital British interests ourselves to fight — what then will be the position in the Mediterranean? *It might be that at some critical moment those consequences would be forced upon us because our trade routes in the Mediterranean might be vital to this country.*

Nobody can say that in the course of the next few weeks there is any particular trade route the keeping open of which may not be vital to this country. What will be our position then? We have not kept a fleet in the Mediterranean which is equal to dealing alone with a combination of other fleets in the Mediterranean. It would be the very

moment when we could not detach more ships to the Mediterranean, and we might have exposed this country from our negative attitude at the present moment to the most appalling risk. *I say that from the point of view of British interests. We feel strongly that France was entitled to know*—and to know at once—*whether or not in the event of attack upon her unprotected northern and western coasts she could depend upon British support.* In that emergency, and in these compelling circumstances, yesterday afternoon I gave to the French Ambassador the following statement:

> I am authorized to give an assurance that if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place.

I read that to the House, not as a declaration of war on our part, not as entailing immediate aggressive action on our part, but as binding us to take aggressive action should that contingency arise. Things move very hurriedly from hour to hour. Fresh news comes in, and I cannot give this in any very formal way; *but I understand that the German Government would be prepared, if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality, to agree that its fleet would not attack the northern coast of France.* I have only heard that shortly before I came to the House, but it is far too narrow an engagement for

us. And, Sir, there is the more serious consideration — becoming more serious every hour — there is the question of the neutrality of Belgium.

I shall have to put before the House at some length what is our position in regard to Belgium. The governing factor is the treaty of 1839, but this is a treaty with a history — a history accumulated since. In 1870, when there was war between France and Germany, the question of the neutrality of Belgium arose, and various things were said. Amongst other things, Prince Bismarck gave an assurance to Belgium that — confirming his verbal assurance, he gave in writing a declaration which he said was superfluous in reference to the treaty in existence — that the German Confederation and its allies would respect the neutrality of Belgium, it being always understood that that neutrality would be respected by the other belligerent Powers. That is valuable as a recognition in 1870 on the part of Germany of the sacredness of these treaty rights.

What was our own attitude? The people who laid down the attitude of the British Government were Lord Granville in the House of Lords and Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons. Lord Granville, on August 8, 1870, used these words. He said:

> We might have explained to the country and to foreign nations, that we could not think this country was bound either morally or internationally, or that its interests were concerned in the maintenance of the neutrality of Belgium; though this course might have had some conveniences, though it might have been easy to adhere to it, though it might have saved us from some immediate danger, it is a course which Her Majesty's Government thought it impossible to adopt in the name of the country

with any due regard to the country's honor or to the country's interests.

Mr. Gladstone spoke as follows two days later:

There is, I admit, the obligation of the treaty. It is not necessary, nor would time permit me, to enter into the complicated question of the nature of the obligations of that treaty; but I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion, that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it, irrespectively altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises. The great authorities upon foreign policy to whom I have been accustomed to listen, such as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, never to my knowledge took that rigid and, if I may venture to say so, that impracticable view of the guarantee. The circumstance that there is already an existing guarantee in force is, of necessity, an important fact, and a weighty element in the case, to which we are bound to give full and ample consideration. There is also this further consideration, the force of which we must all feel most deeply, and that is, the common interests against the unmeasured aggrandizement of any Power whatever.

The treaty is an old treaty — 1839 — and that was the view taken of it in 1870. It is one of those treaties which are founded, not only on consideration for Belgium, which benefits under the treaty, but in the interests of those who guarantee the neutrality of Belgium. The honor and interests are,

at least, as strong today as in 1870, and we cannot take a more narrow view or a less serious view of our obligations, and of the importance of those obligations, than was taken by Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870.

I will read to the House what took place last week on this subject. When mobilization was beginning, I knew that this question must be a most important element in our policy — a most important subject for the House of Commons. I telegraphed at the same time in similar terms to both Paris and Berlin to say that it was essential for us to know whether the French and German Governments respectively were prepared to undertake an engagement to respect the neutrality of Belgium. These are the replies. I got from the French Government this reply:

> The French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure the defence of her security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. The President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs today.

From the German Government the reply was:

> The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could not possibly give an answer before consulting the Emperor and the Imperial Chancellor.

Sir Edward Goschen, to whom I had said it was important to have an answer soon, said he hoped

the answer would not be too long delayed. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs then gave Sir Edward Goschen to understand that he rather doubted whether they could answer at all, as any reply they might give could not fail, in the event of war, to have the undesirable effect of disclosing, to a certain extent, part of their plan of campaign. I telegraphed at the same time to Brussels to the Belgian Government, and I got the following reply from Sir Francis Villiers:

> Belgium expects and desires that other Powers will observe and uphold her neutrality, which she intends to maintain to the utmost of her power. In so informing me, Minister for Foreign Affairs said that, in the event of the violation of the neutrality of their territory, they believed that they were in a position to defend themselves against intrusion. The relations between Belgium and her neighbors were excellent, and there was no reason to suspect their intentions; but he thought it well, nevertheless, to be prepared against emergencies.

It now appears from the news I have received today — which has come quite recently, and I am not yet quite sure how far it has reached me in an accurate form — that an ultimatum has been given to Belgium by Germany, the object of which was to offer Belgium friendly relations with Germany on condition that she would facilitate the passage of German troops through Belgium. Well, Sir, until one has these things absolutely definitely, up to the last moment, I do not wish to say all that one would say if one were in a position to give the House full, complete, and absolute information upon the point. *We were sounded in the course of*

last week as to whether, if a guarantee were given that, after the war, Belgian integrity would be preserved, that would content us. We replied that we could not bargain away whatever interests or obligations we had in Belgian neutrality.

Shortly before I reached the House I was informed that the following telegram had been received from the King of the Belgians by our King — King George:

> Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty's friendship and that of your predecessors, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870, and the proof of friendship she has just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium.

Diplomatic intervention took place last week on our part. What can diplomatic intervention do now? We have great and vital interests in the independence — and integrity is the least part — of Belgium. If Belgium is compelled to submit to allow her neutrality to be violated, of course the situation is clear. Even if by agreement she admitted the violation of her neutrality, it is clear she could only do so under duress. The smaller States in that region of Europe ask but one thing. Their one desire is that they should be left alone and independent. The one thing they fear is, I think, not so much that their integrity but that their independence should be interfered with. If in this war which is before Europe the neutrality of one of those countries is violated, if the troops of one of the combatants violate its neutrality and no action be taken to resent it, at the end of the war, whatever the integrity may be, the independence will be gone.

I have one further quotation from Mr. Gladstone as to what he thought about the independence of Belgium. It will be found in *Hansard,* volume 203, page 1787. I have not had time to read the whole speech and verify the context, but the thing seems to me so clear that no context could make any difference to the meaning of it. Mr. Gladstone said:

> We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question, whether, under the circumstances of the case, this country, endowed as it is with influence and power, would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever stained the pages of history, and thus become participators in the sin.

No, Sir, if it be the case that there has been anything in the nature of an ultimatum to Belgium, asking her to compromise or violate her neutrality, whatever may have been offered to her in return, her independence is gone if that holds. If her independence goes, the independence of Holland will follow. *I ask the House from the point of view of British interests to consider what may be at stake. If France is beaten in a struggle of life and death, beaten to her knees, loses her position as a great Power, becomes subordinate to the will and power of one greater than herself*—consequences which I do not anticipate, because I am sure that France has the power to defend herself with all the energy and ability and patriotism which she has shown so often—*still, if that were to happen and if Belgium fell under the same dominating influence, and then Holland, and then Denmark, then would not Mr. Gladstone's words come true, that*

just opposite to us there would be a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandizement of any Power?

It may be said, I suppose, that we might stand aside, husband our strength and that, whatever happened in the course of this war, at the end of it intervene with effect to put things right, and to adjust them to our point of view. If, in a crisis like this, we run away from those obligations of honor and interest as regards the Belgian treaty, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost. And do not believe, whether a great Power stands outside this war or not, it is going to be in a position at the end of it to exert its superior strength. For us, with a powerful fleet, which we believe able to protect our commerce, to protect our shores, and to protect our interests, if we are engaged in war, we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer even if we stand aside.

We are going to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war, whether we are in it or whether we stand aside. Foreign trade is going to stop, not because the trade routes are closed, but because there is no trade at the other end. Continental nations engaged in war — all their populations, all their energies, all their wealth, engaged in a desperate struggle — they cannot carry on the trade with us that they are carrying on in times of peace, whether we are parties to the war or whether we are not. I do not believe for a moment that at the end of this war, even if we stood aside and remained aside, we should be in a position, a material position, to use our force decisively to undo what had happened in the course of the war, to prevent the whole of the West of Europe opposite to us — if that had been the result of the war — falling under the domination of a single Power, and I am quite sure that

our moral position would be such as to have lost us all respect. I can only say that I have put the question of Belgium somewhat hypothetically, because I am not yet sure of all the facts, but, if the facts turn out to be as they have reached us at present, it is quite clear that there is an obligation on this country to do its utmost to prevent the consequences to which these facts will lead if they are undisputed.

I have read to the House the only engagements that we have yet taken definitely with regard to the use of force. I think it is due to the House to say that we have taken no engagement yet with regard to sending an expeditionary armed force out of the country. Mobilization of the fleet has taken place; mobilization of the army is taking place; but we have as yet taken no engagement, because I feel that — in the case of a European conflagration such as this, unprecedented, with our enormous responsibilities in India and other parts of the Empire, or in countries in British occupation, with all the unknown factors — we must take very carefully into consideration the use which we make of sending an expeditionary force out of the country until we know how we stand. One thing I will say.

The one bright spot in the whole of this terrible situation is Ireland. The general feeling throughout Ireland — and I would like this to be clearly understood abroad — does not make the Irish question a consideration which we feel we have now to take into account. I have told the House how far we have at present gone in commitments and the conditions which influence our policy, and I have put to the House and dwelt at length upon how vital is the condition of the neutrality of Belgium.

What other policy is there before the House? *There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside this war, and that would be that it should imme-*

diately issue a proclamation of unconditional neutrality. We cannot do that. We have made the commitment to France that I have read to the House which prevents us doing that. We have got the consideration of Belgium which prevents us also from any unconditional neutrality, and, without these conditions absolutely satisfied and satisfactory, we are bound not to shrink from proceeding to the use of all the forces in our power. If we did take that line by saying, "We will have nothing whatever to do with this matter" under no conditions—the Belgian treaty obligations, the possible position in the Mediterranean, with damage to British interests, and what may happen to France from our failure to support France—if we were to say that all those things mattered nothing, were as nothing, and to say we would stand aside, *we should, I believe,* sacrifice our respect and good name and reputation before the world, and should *not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences.*

My object has been to explain the view of the Government, and to place before the House the issue and the choice. I do not for a moment conceal, after what I have said, and after the information, incomplete as it is, that I have given to the House with regard to Belgium, that we must be prepared, and we are prepared, for the consequences of having to use all the strength we have at any moment—we know not how soon—to defend ourselves and to take our part. We know, if the facts all be as I have stated them, though I have announced no intending aggressive action on our part, no final decision to resort to force at a moment's notice, until we know the whole of the case, that the use of it may be forced upon us. As far as the forces of the Crown are concerned, we are ready. I believe the Prime Minister and my right honorable friend the First Lord of the Admiralty have no doubt

whatever that the readiness and the efficiency of those forces were never at a higher mark than they are today, and never was there a time when confidence was more justified in the power of the navy to protect our commerce and to protect our shores. The thought is with us always of the suffering and misery entailed, from which no country in Europe will escape by abstention, and from which no neutrality will save us. The amount of harm that can be done by an enemy ship to our trade is infinitesimal, compared with the amount of harm that must be done by the economic condition that is caused on the Continent.

The most awful responsibility is resting upon the Government in deciding what to advise the House of Commons to do. We have disclosed our mind to the House of Commons. We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have, and made clear to the House, I trust, that we are prepared to face that situation, and that should it develop, as probably it may develop, we will face it. We worked for peace up to the last moment, and beyond the last moment. How hard, how persistently and how earnestly we strove for peace last week the House will see from the papers that will be before it.

But that is over, as far as the peace of Europe is concerned. We are now face to face with a situation and all the consequences which it may yet have to unfold. We believe we shall have the support of the House at large in proceeding to whatever the consequences may be and whatever measures may be forced upon us by the development of facts or action taken by others. I believe the country, so quickly has the situation been forced upon it, has not had time to realize the issue. It perhaps is still thinking of the quarrel between Austria and Servia, and not the complications of this matter which have grown out of the quarrel

between Austria and Servia. Russia and Germany we know are at war. We do not yet know officially that Austria, the ally whom Germany is to support, is yet at war with Russia. We know that a good deal has been happening on the French frontier. We do not know that the German Ambassador has left Paris.

The situation has developed so rapidly that technically, as regards the condition of the war, it is most difficult to describe what has actually happened. I wanted to bring out the underlying issues which would affect our own conduct, and our own policy, and to put them clearly. I have now put the vital facts before the House, and if, as seems not improbably, we are forced, and rapidly forced, to take our stand upon those issues, then *I believe, when the country realizes what is at stake, what the real issues are, the magnitude of the impending dangers in the West of Europe, which I have endeavored to describe to the House, we shall be supported throughout,* not only by the House of Commons, but by the determination, the resolution, the courage, and the endurance of the whole country.

II

SPEECH BY MR. RAMSEY MACDONALD, M. P., IN RESPONSE TO STATEMENT OF SIR EDWARD GREY.

I should, had circumstances permitted, have preferred to remain silent this afternoon. But circumstances do not permit of that. I shall model what I have to say on the two speeches we have listened to, and I shall be brief. The right honorable gentleman, to a House which in a great majority is with him, has delivered a speech the echoes of which

will go down in history. The speech has been impressive, but however much we may resist the conclusion to which he has come, we have not been able to resist the moving character of his appeal. I think he is wrong. I think the Government which he represents and for which he speaks is wrong. I think the verdict of history will be that they are wrong. We shall see. The effect of the right honorable gentleman's speech in this House is not to be its final effect. There may be opportunities, or there may not be opportunities, for us to go into details, but I want to say to this House, and to say it without equivocation, if the right honorable gentleman had come here today and told us that our country is in danger, I do not care what party he appealed to, or to what class he appealed, we would be with him and behind him. If this is so, we will vote him what money he wants. Yes, and we will go farther. We will offer him ourselves if the country is in danger. But he has not persuaded me that it is. He has not persuaded my honorable friends who cooperate with me that it is, and I am perfectly certain, when his speech gets into cold print tomorrow, he will not persuade a large section of the country. If the nation's honour were in danger we would be with him. There has been no crime committed by statesmen of this character without those statesmen appealing to their nation's honour. We fought the Crimean War because of our honour. We rushed to South Africa because of our honour. The right honorable gentleman is appealing to us today because of our honour. There is a third point. If the right honorable gentleman could come to us and tell us that a small European nationality like Belgium is in danger, and could assure us he is going to confine the conflict to that question, then we would support him. *What is the use of talking about coming to the aid of Belgium, when, as a matter of fact, you are engaging in a whole European*

war which is not going to leave the map of Europe in the position it is in now?

The right honorable gentleman said nothing about Russia. We want to know about that. We want to try to find out what is going to happen, when it is all over, to the power of Russia in Europe, and we are not going to go blindly into this conflict without having some sort of a rough idea as to what is going to happen. Finally, so far as France is concerned, we say solemnly and definitely that no such friendship as the right honorable gentleman describes between one nation and another could ever justify one of those nations entering into war on behalf of the other. If France is really in danger, if, as the result of this, we are going to have the power, civilization, and genius of France removed from European history, then let him say so. But it is an absolutely impossible conception which we are talking about to endeavour to justify that which the right honorable gentleman has foreshadowed. I do not only know but I feel that the feeling of the House is against us. I have been through this before, and 1906 came as part recompense. It will come again. We are going to go through it all. We will go through it all. So far as we are concerned, whatever may happen, whatever may be said about us, whatever attacks may be made upon us, we will take the action that we will take of saying that this country ought to have remained neutral, because in the deepest parts of our hearts we believe that that was right and that that alone was consistent with the honour of the country and the traditions of the party that is now in office.

III

LETTER BY BARON DE L'ESCAILLE, BELGIAN MINISTER AT ST. PETERSBURG, TO M. DAVIGNON, BELGIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Belgium Legation.
St. Petersburg.
July 30, 1914.

To His Excellency M. Davignon,
Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Secretary:

Yesterday and the day before yesterday have passed in the expectation of events that must inevitably follow Austria-Hungary's declaration of war against Servia. The most contradictory reports have been circulating, without its being possible to distinguish between the true and the false, concerning the intentions of the Imperial Russian Government. *Only one thing is uncontradicted, which is that Germany has made earnest efforts here and in Vienna to find some way of avoiding a general conflict.* On the one side, however, it has met with the firm decision of the Vienna Cabinet not to yield a step, and on the other side with the mistrust of the St. Petersburg Cabinet against the assurance of Austria-Hungary, that it only intends to punish Servia, and not to take a part of her territory.

M. Sasonoff has said that it is impossible for Russia to avoid holding herself in readiness and not to mobilize, that these preparations, however, are not directed against Germany. This morning an official communication in the newspapers announced that the reserves in a certain

number of governments have been called to the colors. *Anyone who knows the custom of the official Russian communications to keep something in reserve, can safely maintain that a general mobilization is taking place.*

The German Ambassador has this morning declared that he has reached the end of the efforts which since Saturday he has been making without interruption for a satisfactory arrangement, and that he has almost given up hope.

I have been told that the English Ambassador also has expressed himself in the same way. England has recently proposed arbitration. Sasonoff answered: "We have ourselves proposed it to Austria-Hungary, but it has rejected the proposal." To the proposal of a conference, Germany answered with the counterproposal of an understanding between the Cabinets. One might truly ask oneself whether the whole world does not wish war and only seeks to postpone for awhile the declaration, in order to gain time.

England at first let it be understood that it would not allow itself to be drawn into a conflict. Sir George Buchanan said that quite openly. Today in St. Petersburg one is firmly persuaded that *England will stand by the side of France, and even that the assurance of this has been given. This assistance is of quite extraordinary weight, and has not a little contributed to give the war party the upper hand.* The Russian Government has in these last days given free rein to all demonstrations friendly to Servia and hostile to Austria, and has in no wise attempted to suppress them. In the council of ministers, which took place yesterday morning, differences of opinion still showed themselves; the declaring of a mobilization was

postponed, but since then a change has appeared, *the war party has attained the upper hand, and this morning at four o'clock the mobilization was ordered.*

The army which feels itself strong, is full of enthusiasm, and bases great hopes on the extraordinary progress which it has made since the Japanese War. The navy is still so far from the completion of its plans of reorganization that it is scarcely to be taken into account. For this reason, *the assurance of English assistance is considered of such great importance.*

As I had the honor of telegraphing you today (T.10) all hopes of a peaceable solution seem to have vanished; that is the view of the diplomatic corps.

I have made use of the route via Stockholm with the Nordisk Cable for sending my telegram, as it is safer than the other.

I am entrusting this report to a private courier, who will post it in Germany.

Please receive, Mr. Secretary, the assurance of my greatest respect.

(Signed) B. DE l'ESCAILLE.

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